WORLD / A30

UK now probing spy poisoning as murder from London to Moscow

WORLD / A29

US Vice President Cheney's gay daughter pregnant; Conservatives dismayed

ENTERTAINMENT / M4

A peek at Monique Wilson's Notting Hill flat in London with the oriental look

LIFESTYLE / D1

Pitoy bags show for Asean Summit; all models past and present beauty queens

Having fun is cheaper than living day to day

KAYA JOIN NA LANG KAYO LETS HAVE A GOOD TIME

LONDON—THOSE WHO need an excuse to enjoy themselves this festive season now have a very good one—having fun has become cheaper, while day-to-day living expenses have rocketed.

The "cost of fun" has

HAVING/ A12

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, December 8, 2006 ★★★ 14 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 363 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Iraq Study Group finds Bush war policies wrong

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush's war policies have failed in almost every regard, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group concluded, and it warned of dwindling chances to change course before crisis turns to chaos.

Nearly four years and $400 billion into a deeply unpopular war that has killed tens of thousands of Iraqis and more than 2,900 Ameri-

IRAQ STUDY/ A5

It's all-out war vs Con-ass

It's done: House set to convene Con-ass

By Michael Lim Ubac and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE DEED WAS DONE AS YESterday dawned, with the majority in the House of Representatives adopting through a voice vote a resolution convening what may turn out to be a Senate-less constituent assembly (Con-ass).

House Resolution No. 197 was approved after 12 hours of contentious debate and impassioned boos from the gallery. It allows Congress to exercise its "constituent powers" to propose political and economic reforms, including abolishing the "gridlock-prone" presidential system and lifting the "protectionist provisions" of the Constitution, according to Speaker Jose de Venecia.

The Speaker immediately instructed House Secretary General Roberto Nazareno to send individual invitations to 23 senators and 231 members of the House to take part in the Con-ass, which is to commence at 10 a.m. on Dec. 12 in the plenary hall of the Batasang Pambansa.

Resolution No. 197, which was substituted for Resolution No.

IT'S DONE/ A23

REMING: Calamity
GMA AND JDV: national disaster

DANCING WITH THE STARS of Con-ass and Cha-cha is all the rage at a militant group's rally on Thursday at Mabuhay Rotunda in Quezon City, a preview, perhaps, of the nationwide protest actions planned by the Catholic bishops in all their 86 dioceses, the Protestant Church, El Shaddai, civil society and, of course, the aforementioned militants.

JOAN BONDOC

On Dec. 15, all roads lead to Rizal Park

By Carla Gomez and Nestor P. Burgos Jr. *Inquirer Visayas* **and Christian V. Esguerra**

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS ORGANIZING A massive prayer rally on Dec. 15 against the House of Representatives' move to amend the Constitution by convening itself into a constituent assembly (Con-ass).

Part of the Church plan is to fill up Rizal Park in Manila which, in rallies past, had held up to around one million people.

A Protestant umbrella group, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, is joining the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the charismatic Catholic group El Shaddai in opposing the Malacañang-backed move in the House.

Other groups and individuals such as labor and peasant organizations and President Joseph Estrada are calling on their forces to oppose Con-ass.

Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the CBCP, issued on Wednesday a strongly worded statement describing the House effort as "fraudulently illegal and scandalously immoral."

The CBCP yesterday said simultaneous prayer rallies would be held in all dioceses around the country, according to Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, conference spokesperson.

The country has 86 dioceses, including the military ordinariate, the Church unit for soldiers and policemen headed by Bishop Leopoldo Tumulak.

"There is a need to respond more collectively to the present crisis produced by the prospect of Charter change (Cha-cha) by administration congressmen desperately bent on creating themselves into a constituent assembly," Lagdameo said in the statement titled "Watch and Pray: Magmalasakit Para sa Bayan."

He called on people to be vigi-

IT'S ALL-OUT/ A23

Inquirer starts relief drive for storm victims

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRer encourages its readers to make a difference by supporting the donation drive of Caritas Manila.

To mark its 21st anniversary on Dec. 9, the INQUIRER employees initiated a drive for the relief and rehabilitation of the mudslide victims of Bicol. The company has also downgraded its 21st anniversary celebration and directed the funds for the

INQUIRER/ A12

GMA gives mayors 'Christmas love'

By Carla Gomez and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—EACH OF THE Western Visayas mayors who signed a manifesto supporting Charter change (Cha-cha) through a constituent assembly (Con-ass) received amounts ranging from P20,000 to P50,000 at an Iloilo City hotel where they met with President Macapagal-Arroyo on Tuesday.

Two town mayors who attended the meeting—one from Negros Occidental and the other from Iloilo—confirmed receiving the "cash gifts." The mayors had "sold their souls for a pittance," said Rodolfo Parreño of the Negros Movement of Moral Regeneration.

But Mayor Liberty Manzano of Candoni, Negros Occidental, said the money that she and her colleagues received was not in payment of their support of Con-ass and was only "a Christmas gift for us and our families."

She said the town mayors received P20,000 each in envelopes containing Christmas cards with pictures of the First Family.

"It was Christmas love," Manzano said, adding:

"The President told us she had no other purpose but to spend Christ-

GMA GIVES/ A23

Puno: Cha-cha, Con-ass like apples and oranges

By Armand N. Nocum, TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

GO FIGURE.

Newly appointed Chief Justice Reynato Puno yesterday said that Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in Congress were mistaken in thinking that they had figured out his stand on the constituent assembly (Con-ass) convened by the House of Representatives to change the Constitution.

"I don't think anybody can figure me out," Puno said at the first press briefing called at the Supreme Court following his appointment as

PUNO/ A12

RYAN LIM

IN-YOUR-FACE remarks from Chief Justice just Day 1 in office.

New storm threatens Cebu party

By Blanche S. Rivera

RAINS, NOT PROTEST RALLIES, are likely to blow off course the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit in Cebu on Monday as another tropical storm entered the Philippines and appeared to be headed for the Visayas.

Tropical Depression "Seniang," the 19th weather disturbance to hit the country, entered the Philippine area of responsibility late yesterday afternoon, packing winds of 55 kilometers per hour near the center, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.

Seniang was located 1,010 km

NEW/ A12

US, UK, AUSSIE WARNINGS

Protesters, not terrorists, are the threats, say cops

By Volt Contreras

CEBU CITY—DEMONSTRATORS, not terrorists, are the "existing threat" to the coming 12th Asean Summit here, where up to 16 heads of state will converge next week for talks that include terrorism as tops on the agenda.

A ranking police officer in charge of summit security yesterday made this assertion as he joined other officials in shrugging off the travel warnings issued Wednesday by the United States, Britain and Australia on a supposed terrorist plot targeting Cebu province during the meetings.

In separate advisories, the three countries told their citizens to avoid travel to the province. British officials said they "believe that terrorists are in the final stages of planning attacks."

Philippine security officials said they had not discovered any specific terror threats against the summit of the 10-member Asean, but that they were not discounting them.

"We have received information, but these are not validated threats," military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said.

"We are not discounting the possibility that some … threat groups would take advantage of the Asean Summit, but security forces … are all prepared and all contingencies have been taken

PROTESTERS/ A22

THE DASH, COLORS AND GRACE of the Cebuanos mark the inaugural of the Cebu International Convention Center on Wednesday night.

CEBU DAILY NEWS/TONEE DESPOJO

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/07/06

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Smith still in Makati as judge takes day off

POZON

SMITH

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Nikko Dizon

THE FILIPINO JUDGE IN THE middle of the controversy surrounding the place of detention for a United States Marine convicted of raping a Filipino has gone fishing, so to speak.

Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon took the day off yesterday, taking his time to settle the matter of where to incarcerate Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith—at the Makati City Jail or back under American custody—while the rape conviction of the 21-year-old Marine was under automatic appeal. Smith was convicted this week of raping the 22-year-old Filipino at the Subic Bay Freeport last year.

"He [Pozon] said he is studying the motion for reconsideration [filed by Smith's lawyer]... He is also thinking if he will set a hearing on the motion," said Jun Sumbilla, officer in charge of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 139.

VFA cited

Smith's lawyer, Jose Justiniano, on Tuesday appealed Pozon's order to hold at Smith at the Makati city jail, citing provisions in the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

The rape victim, identified throughout the trial only as "Nicole" had blocked the move, claiming that giving Smith back to US authorities "would be tantamount to setting free or granting liberty" to the convicted Marine.

Sought for comment, Justiniano said: "We will just wait. When you file any motion, there is no timetable within which the judge should issue a resolution. We have submitted our arguments and it's up to the judge to rule on it."

He, however, said he was confident that a favorable ruling was at hand.

Justiniano's motion, filed with the conformity of the Department of Justice, contended that Smith must remain under US custody pending the appeal of his conviction, as provided for under the VFA.

"When our motion has the concurrence of the adverse party (the Department of Justice), there is no reason that it should not be granted," Justiniano said in a phone interview.

Smith and his three US Marine coaccused, who were acquitted in the rape case, were detained at the US Embassy compound in Manila throughout the roughly one year it took to try the rape case.

'Seizure' of Smith

Calling Smith's detention in Makati a "seizure," US Ambassador Kristie Kenney reiterated that her government should have custody of the Marine during a meeting with Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo on Wednesday.

Judge Pozon had said on Tuesday that his court "will abide" by any agreement between the Philippine and US governments on where Smith should serve his 40-year prison sentence.

Justiniano, however, said Smith's conviction was subject to appeal and, hence, he should remain under US custody "until the final judgment," or until all legal remedies shall have been exhausted. Smith could go all the way to the Supreme Court to try and reverse his conviction.

Supt. Serafin Barretto, National Capital Region director of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), said yesterday Makati jail officials had rehearsed how they would spirit Smith out of the 1,900-square-meter jail compound in Barangay Northside, Makati City, should the court order his release.

Under close watch

"We held rehearsals yesterday. Of course he would exit through the main gate because there is no other way out. He will board a vehicle then it will drive straight out," Barretto said.

Since he arrived at the Makati city jail, Smith had been under constant watch by BJMP guards and "observers" from the US Embassy.

The Marine was staying in a room separate from the detention area, into which more than 600 inmates were crammed.

As to whether the United States was receptive to the idea of reviewing the VFA, Ambassador Kenney told reporters yesterday this was not possible until the Philippine government "complies" with its treaty obligations, particularly the tug-of-war over Smith.

"Until we have got this current case in complete compliance with the VFA, it's pointless to discuss any future action," she said.

"We have the VFA. It's very important that the two governments live up to that. The government of the United States has done so. We are confident that the government of the Philippines will correct the current confusion and live up to their end as well," Kenney said.

Revisiting VFA

Asked if the US would exert all efforts to expedite Smith's transfer from the Makati jail, where he has spent four days and three nights, Kenney replied: "The VFA is very, very clear as has been expressed by the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs), the secretary of justice. It is a legal agreement, a bilateral agreement between two nations and it very clearly states that custody of any service member rests with the US until the conclusion of all judicial proceedings. It's very important that obviously both sides live up to their agreement."

VFA Commission executive director Zosimo Paredes had said that the treaty should be revisited, pointing out that a good model of a military treaty was the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the US and Japan.

Rafael Seguis, foreign undersecretary for special concerns, had said that if there were to be a review of the VFA, it should be done after the Subic rape case was over with.

Comelec: It's all up to Congress

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS is leaving it up to Congress to decide whether to cancel or go ahead with the 2007 elections, amid the House of Representatives' determined bid to push Charter change through a constituent assembly.

"It all depends on Congress" and "I can't say for sure" were Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.'s answer to questions about how the Comelec's ongoing preparations for the mid-term elections would be affected if con-ass succeeds.

According to Abalos, what the poll body is prepared to do is implement the computerization of election procedures in selected areas as set out in the automated elections law recently approved by Congress and which is awaiting the President's signature.

He said he had called a meeting of the Comelec's advisory council and technical consultants to identify the 12 areas where election automation would be pilot-tested.

The council will select the appropriate technology for the automation, which covers five areas—voting, counting, transmission, consolidation and recount.

Believe it or not: RP's a net lender

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

AFTER DECADES MIRED IN A DEBT HOLE, PRESIdent Macapagal-Arroyo exulted to delegates to the Asean summit yesterday, the Philippines now had deposits in multilateral institutions larger in amount than the loans it owed.

"The Philippines is now a net lender rather than a borrower. In other words, our deposits for instance in the World Bank, in the Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund are bigger than our loans from them," said the President in a speech at the Asean Electronics Business Opportunities conference in Makati.

The President that the country's improving stature in the financial community could be traced to the fiscal reforms that her administration instituted which saw taxes raised and borrowings pared.

She listed other economic feats: "The lowest inflation in the last 29 months, the stock market has remained bullish for some time, and Philippine bonds are up. We are due for a credit upgrade."

The President said the savings generated from the reduced interest payments would be used to undertake more infrastructure projects such as airports, seaports, roads, and telecommunication systems that would further boost investor confidence in the country.

The investments, the President said, would be a boon to the electronics manufacturing industry where the Philippines and the rest of Asean had been striving to excel as global players.

The President told the Asean delegates that she was planning to institute round-the-clock Customs operations in an integrated Asean market in order to get a bigger slice of the world electronics market estimated to hit $1.7 trillion by 2009 from $1.5 trillion this year.

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Filipiniana gifts await Asean delegates in Cebu

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—GIFTS OF HAND-EMbroidered *barong* and gowns with hand-painted *sampaguita* flowers and leaves await foreign and economic ministers attending the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) meetings next week.

Aster Caberte, trade regional director, said the 12th Asean Summit's organizing committee decided that the gifts, which would also be given to the senior officials' spouses, should depict the culture and skill of the Visayans.

Cebuana designer Joy Bernaldez, whose expertise is in hand-painted *jusi* gowns, had been asked to make the *barong Tagalog* and gowns sometime in October, Caberte said.

Bernaldez submitted 12 designs for the gowns and several more for the *barong Tagalog* to the Asean summit's organizing committee for approval.

Caberte said the committee picked the *piña* fabric from Kalibo, capital of Aklan, as material for both attire.

Kalibo is the center of *piña* cloth weaving in the province. Using hand looms, the weavers, usually women, produce the gossamer *piña* fabric from the mature leaves of pineapples.

Although she was busy when the orders for the *barong Tagalog* and gowns came and she was given a short time to complete them, Bernaldez said she accepted it.

"It was nerve-wracking. But it was an honor to do something [for the Asean summit]. I knew it was going to take extra, extra care to make the outfits based on the measurement given to us," she pointed out.

The *barong Tagalog* was embroidered in either Kalibo or Laguna, Bernaldez said. The hand painting for each gown would be completed in her shop in one and a half day.

Bernaldez said the ministers' attire was in natural color, while the gowns were of different colors.

She said the summit would provide an opportunity to showcase Cebuano craftsmanship.

Caberte lauded those in the private sector who wanted to help in the summit preparations by reducing the prices of special tokens. "They just asked me how much the government could afford and they give me these products almost at cost," she said.

The sector considers the hosting of the summit as a way to showcase products made in the region, she said.

The tokens include jewelry boxes made of mother of pearl from a Negros Oriental company, guitar replicas from Lapu-Lapu City, beaded abaca slippers and fashion accessories from Cebu, Dumaguete and the exhibitors of the One Town, One Product (Otop) Visayas fair, delicacies from Cebu and Bohol, key chains and souvenir T-shirts showing the sights of Cebu.

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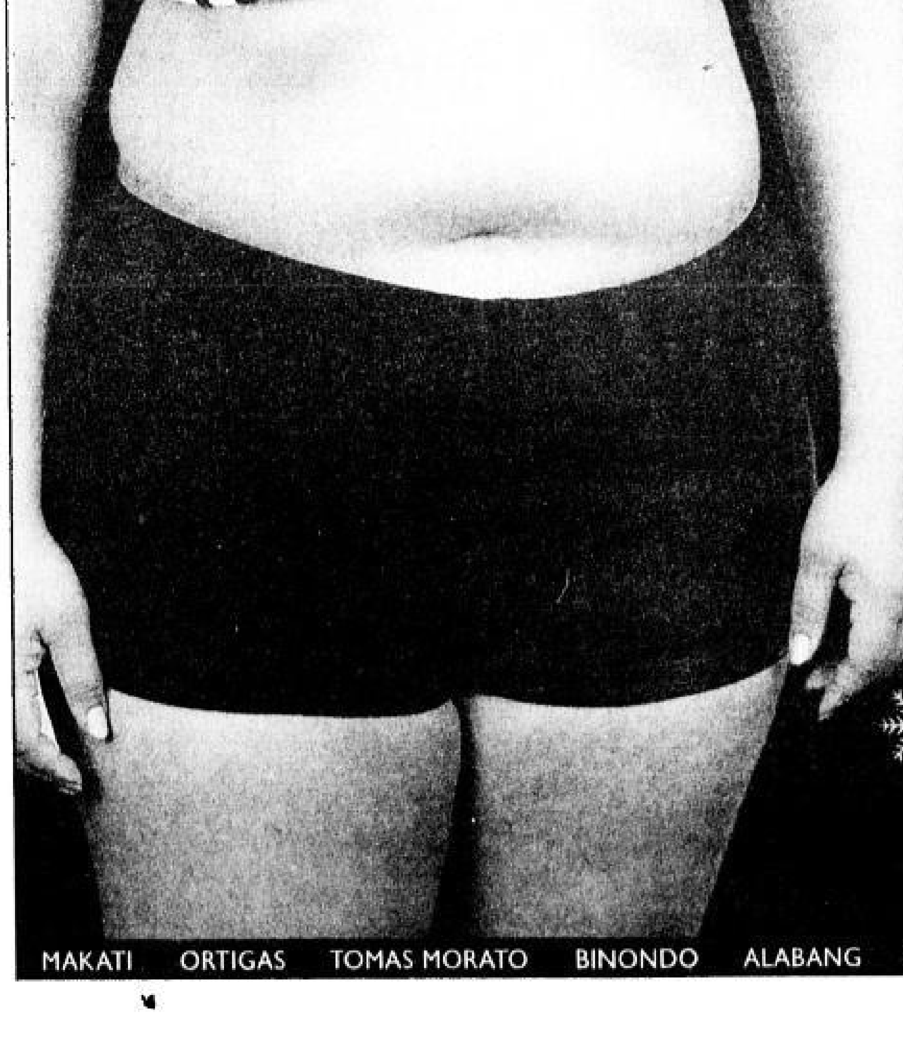

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Immigration exec denies link to deportation scam

By Leila B. Salaverria

AN OFFICIAL LINKED TO AN ALleged deportation scam at the Bureau of Immigration said he was willing to testify in the investigation Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers had called for, otherwise he might be made the scapegoat in the incident.

Assistant Immigration Commissioner' Teodoro Delarmente said he was not involved in the escape from BI detention of Vietnamese-American terror suspect Vo Van Duc in May 2005.

Barbers, who said Duc and Chinese kidnap suspect Zhang Du were released from detention without clearance from the courts or the police, had used the incidents to denounce an alleged deportation-for-sale scam at the Bureau of Immigration.

Delarmente said he would heed the subpoena to appear at a House hearing into the matter next week. Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. had also said earlier that he would cooperate with Barbers' probe.

Delarmente said that while he had signed the order deporting Duc to the United States, as the acting immigration commissioner at the time, the issuance of the order was an act approved by the entire immigration board of commissioners.

He said he alone could not have signed the deportation order, since it had to be signed by the other members of the board, which in Duc's case included José Cabochan and Roy Almoro.

Delarmente said the deportation order was issued based on the charge sheet prepared by immigration prosecutors.

"We issued the summary deportation order based on the charge sheet submitted by Mr. Faizal Hussin, who had said that Vo Van Duc was overstaying and engaging in unauthorized political activities," Delarmente said in an interview.

He added, however, that the charge sheet did not specify that Duc was a terror suspect.

He also said it was not the immigration commissioners' job to implement the deportation order and its enforcement was not automatic.

"There's a clause [that says] that the deportation would only push through after clearances are obtained. It's not the duty of the board to do that," Delarmente said.

He said the bureau's legal and intelligence departments were supposed to get the clearances from the courts and the police to show that the foreigner involved had no pending cases.

Once the clearances are obtained, the deportation order is implemented by the Civil Security Unit, Delarmente said.

In the case of Duc, Delarmente said he had a copy of a report from former CSU chief Wendy Rosario that narrated how Duc was able to escape.

Rosario in the report said that a certain Alma Gonzales, a representative of Duc's lawyer, had gotten in touch with him and informed him of the deportation order on Duc.

No turnover

After getting Duc's clearances straightened out, Gonzales told Rosario that Duc was scheduled to leave May 21, 2005, a Saturday.

Rosario allegedly assigned BI confidential agent Lito Pagaduan to escort Duc. Rosario, however, said that Pagaduan failed to properly turn Duc over to the BI officers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Rosario said he learned that Duc did not use his American passport to leave the country but a Philippine one allegedly under the name of one Armando Luat.

Duc also reportedly used an Emirates airline ticket bound for Africa and not the Cathay Pacific ticket he was to use for the United States.

He was also said to have been assisted personally by airport personnel, Rosario said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, December 8, 2006
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1st Reading:	Gen 3:9-15, 20
2nd Reading:	Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
Gospel:	Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

Today we celebrate what is true knowledge and what constitutes life. We all know both good and evil, and that we choose freely, with consequences for our actions. And we all seek for God even as we stumble and sin. But God has bestowed on us all in Jesus every spiritual blessing in the heavens! We all belong to God, chosen since before the world began and we are all called to be blameless and holy, and live as we have been called: as the beloved children of God. Mary was chosen and she responded: "Let it be done to me according to God's Word." We have each/all been chosen and we too bend before the wonder of our God and pray: "Let it be done to me according to God's Word." At our baptisms we know the gift of being born in God.

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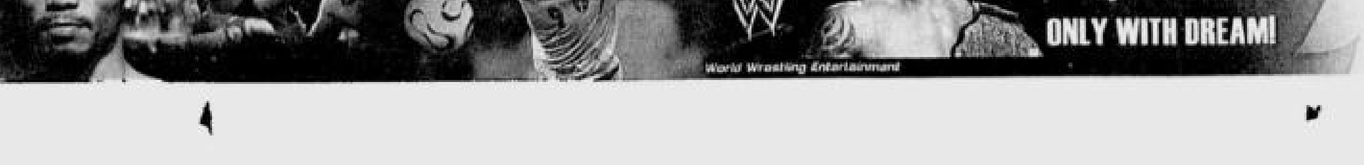

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Iraq Study Group finds Bush war ...

From page A1

cans, violence is bad and getting worse, success is not guaranteed, and the consequences of failure are great, the panel of five Republicans and five Democrats said in a bleak accounting of US and Iraqi shortcomings.

They warned that the implications were dire for terrorism, the war in the Middle East and higher oil prices around the world.

The panel said the United States should find ways to pull back most of its combat forces by early 2008 and focus US troops on training and supporting Iraqi units. The United States also should begin a "diplomatic offensive" by the end of the month and engage adversaries Iran and Syria in an effort to quell sectarian violence and shore up the fragile Iraqi government, according to the report.

It also warned that without solving the region's other problems, especially the Arabs' long dispute with Israel, instability would continue in Iraq and the region.

The report's release came after a sobering assessment by Robert Gates—who was confirmed Wednesday as Bush's new defense secretary—that the United States is not winning in Iraq.

Time is running out

"Despite a massive effort, stability in Iraq remains elusive and the situation is deteriorating," the independent report said. "The ability of the United States to shape outcomes is diminishing. Time is running out."

The group's recommendations do not endorse either the current White House strategy of staying put in Iraq or calls from Bush's political opponents for a quick pullout or a firm timetable for withdrawal.

"The report is an acknowledgment that there will be no military solution in Iraq. It will require a political solution arrived at through sustained Iraqi and regionwide diplomacy and engagement," said Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel.

Incoming Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats said the report had left the ball in Bush's court.

"If the president is serious about the need for change in Iraq, he will find Democrats ready to work with him in a bipartisan fashion to find a way to end the war as quickly as possible," Pelosi said.

The panel members said they tried to avoid politically charged language such as "victory" or "civil war," but the words they chose were powerful. The report said the current strategy was not working and laid out examples of where it had come up short.

The military reported that 10 American troops were killed Wednesday, adding to the toll of US forces who have died since the invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in March 2003. The United States has about 140,000 troops in the country.

No longer viable

"We do not recommend a stay-the-course solution," said James A. Baker III, a former secretary of state and Bush family adviser who cochaired the commission. "In our opinion, that approach is no longer viable."

Former Democratic Rep. Lee Hamilton, the other commission chair, said the panel agreed with Bush's goal of an Iraq able to govern, protect and sustain itself, but pointed out that the administration needed new approaches.

"No course of action in Iraq is guaranteed to stop a slide toward chaos," Hamilton said. "Yet, in our view, not all options have been exhausted."

The report has been widely seen as an opportunity for Bush to pivot from policies blamed in large part for Republican losses in elections last month. Bush praised the group's work, but gave no hint of his next move. He said he would give the findings a hard look and urged Congress to do the same.

Bipartisan effort

"This report gives a very tough assessment of the situation in Iraq," Bush said after an early morning briefing from the group of former government officials and advisers. "It is a report that brings some really very interesting proposals, and we will take every proposal seriously, and we will act in a timely fashion."

Bush met later with members of Congress from both parties and said he wanted to cooperate to "send a message to the American people that the struggle for freedom, the struggle for our security is not the purview of one party over the other."

The commission also briefed members of the Iraqi government by teleconference, and one official there agreed that Iraqis must take responsibility for their own security. "Absolute dependence on foreign troops is not possible," said Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh.

The Bush administration has tried to keep the commission at arm's length so as not to appear hostage to its recommendations. To make the point that Bush will make his own choices, White House officials stress that other administration reviews are under way and Bush will have a menu of options to consider.

Baker offered a word of caution on that point during an interview with Associated Press Television News on Wednesday.

"This is the only bipartisan report for sale," and thus the one most likely to gain crucial consensus, Baker said.

79 recommendations

Among its 79 recommendations, the group said the United States should reduce political, military or economic support for Iraq if the government in Baghdad cannot make substantial progress.

The report said Iraqi leaders had failed to deliver better security or political compromises that would reduce violence, and it implied that a four-month joint US-Iraqi military campaign to reduce violence in Baghdad was hopeless.

"Because none of the operations conducted by US and Iraqi military forces are fundamentally changing the conditions encouraging the sectarian violence, US forces seem to be caught in a mission that has no foreseeable end," the report said.

That was a withering evaluation of a central tenet of the Bush military strategy in Iraq. In Baghdad and elsewhere, US forces are supposed to help Iraqi units "clear, hold and build," shorthand for routing insurgents or other fighters from problem areas, securing those areas from further violence and setting a positive future course.

On the highly emotional issue of troop withdrawals, the commission warned against either a precipitous pullback or an open-ended commitment to a large deployment.

The report said "military priorities must change" toward a goal of training, equipping and advising Iraqi forces.

It said Bush should put aside misgivings and engage Syria, Iran and the leaders of insurgent forces in negotiations on Iraq's future, to begin by year's end. It urged him to revive efforts at a broader Middle East peace.

The report laid out consequences from bad to worse, including the threat of a wider war in the Middle East and reduced oil production that would hurt the global economy.

Slap at Pentagon

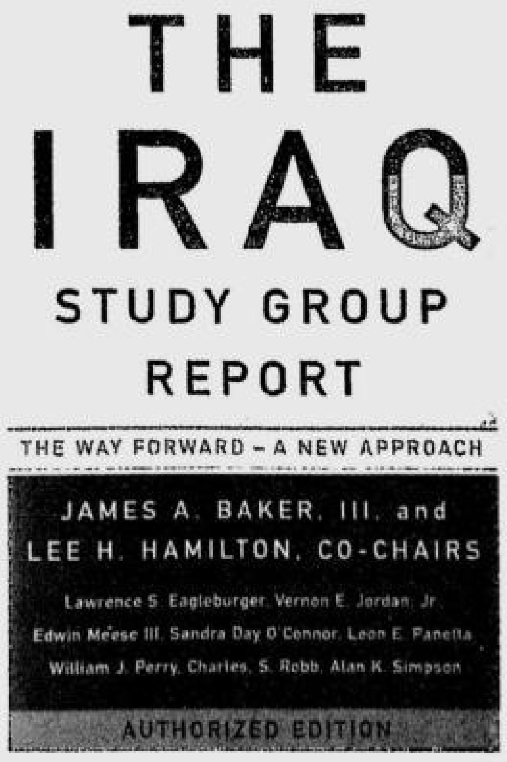
In a slap at the Pentagon, the commission said there was significant underreporting of the actual level of violence in Iraq. It also faulted the US intelligence effort, saying the government "still does not understand very well either the insurgency in Iraq or the role of the militias."

The commission recommended the number of US troops embedded to train Iraqis should increase dramatically, from 3,000 to 4,000 currently to 10,000 to 20,000. Commission member William Perry, defense secretary during the Clinton administration, said those troops could be drawn from combat brigades already in Iraq.

According to the report, US spending in Iraq runs to about $8 billion a month and that the bills will keep coming.

"Caring for veterans and replacing lost equipment will run into the hundreds of billions of dollars," the commission said. "Estimates run as high as $2 trillion for the final cost of the US involvement in Iraq." *AP*

FAMILY FRIENDS: President Bush with Iraq Study Group co-chairs Lee Hamilton (left) and James A. Baker III, who are long-time trusted advisers of the President's father. AP



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Mayuga to take secret report to retirement

By Dona Pazzibugan

OUTGOING NAVY FLAG OFFICER in Command Vice Admiral Mateo Mayuga still refuses to disclose his controversial report that cleared four generals including military chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. of involvement in the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

Mayuga, who will relinquish his post today a day ahead of his retirement, said he stood by the conclusion reached by the five-man fact-finding panel that there was no evidence against the so-called "Hello Garci" generals.

"The fact that I can sleep eight hours a night, (*siguro ayos yun*) maybe means we did good," Mayuga told reporters during the testimonial parade and review at sea given him yesterday.

As of press time, with less than 24 hours before the turnover ceremonies set at 3 p.m. today, Malacañang has not yet announce who will replace Mayuga.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself is expected to preside over the ceremonies, marking the first time a commander-in-chief will preside over the turnover rites for a major service commander.

By protocol, it is the Armed Forces Chief of Staff and the secretary of the Department of National Defense who preside over the turnover ceremonies for major service commanders (ie., the Army, Navy and Air Force chiefs).

Ms Arroyo has chosen to be acting defense secretary—for the second time in her six years in office—since her erstwhile trusted adviser Avelino Cruz Jr. resigned as defense chief last Nov. 30 due to his disagreement with Malacañang's support for the people's initiative campaign to amend the Constitution.

Acting capacity

Ms Arroyo's expected attendance at the Navy turnover rites did little to put down rumors that an acting Navy chief would be appointed.

The Board of Generals has recommended three rear admirals for the post. They are AFP Inspector General Rogelio Calunsag; AFP deputy chief of staff for communications Petronilo Magno, and Navy chief of staff Emilio Marayag.

But according to Navy sources, AFP Western Command chief Vice Admiral Tirso Danga who nearly ousted Mayuga last September, is lobbying to be named acting Navy chief at least, since he is no longer qualified to be Navy chief.

Danga was the head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines at the time of the alleged "Hello Garci" wiretapping. He could not be reached through his cellphone.

Mayuga yesterday dodged the issue. "Whatever the decision of the President is, then we will have to respect it," he said.

No evidence

Mayuga was the AFP Inspector General when he headed a fact-finding inquiry into the involvement of the military in election cheating last year, due to the demand of several officers for an investigation into the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Last April 12, by which time he has been named Navy chief, Mayuga announced that the witnesses who came forward before the panel had no direct knowledge about any election wrongdoing of the four generals mentioned in the "Hello Garci" tapes.

The Mayuga board cleared Esperon, former Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Gabriel Habacon and retired Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko of allegations they took part in cheating for Ms Arroyo in the 2004 elections.

Also cleared was retired Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani, who was alleged to be sympathetic to the political opposition.

The Mayuga board also virtually cleared the entire military of any election wrongdoing. However Mayuga refused to release the report nor did he entertain interviews about it.

Court-martial

Former Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, who leads the 30 officers facing court-martial for mutiny last February, claimed Mayuga had admitted before a number of Marine officers that many potential witnesses failed to appear out of fear for their lives and their careers.

Charges filed vs 3 labor officials

By Norman Bordadora

THE OMBUDSMAN yesterday filed graft charges against a commissioner of the National Labor Relations Commission and two officials of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration for allegedly asking P400,000 from a Filipino-Canadian who wanted to secure a license for her labor recruitment agency.

Charged before the Sandiganbayan were NLRC commissioner Victoriano Calaycay, POEA officials Augustus Hidalgo and Zomer Ochavillo, and a certain Dennis Gabionza.

The complaint signed by Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez said that the four respondents demanded P400,000 from businesswoman Jocelyn Enriquez in exchange for the swift processing of her license to operate a recruitment agency.

Records show that four respondents asked the complainant to give a 50-percent down payment on Dec. 1, 2006.

Enriquez sought the help of the National Bureau of Investigation which immediately conducted an entrapment operation against the respondents.

When the NBI operatives saw the respondents accepting the P200,000 marked money from the complainant, they immediately apprehended the respondents and submitted the case to the Department of Justice for inquest proceedings.

The case then was forwarded to the Office of the Ombudsman for filing before the Sandiganbayan, the respondents being ranking government officials.

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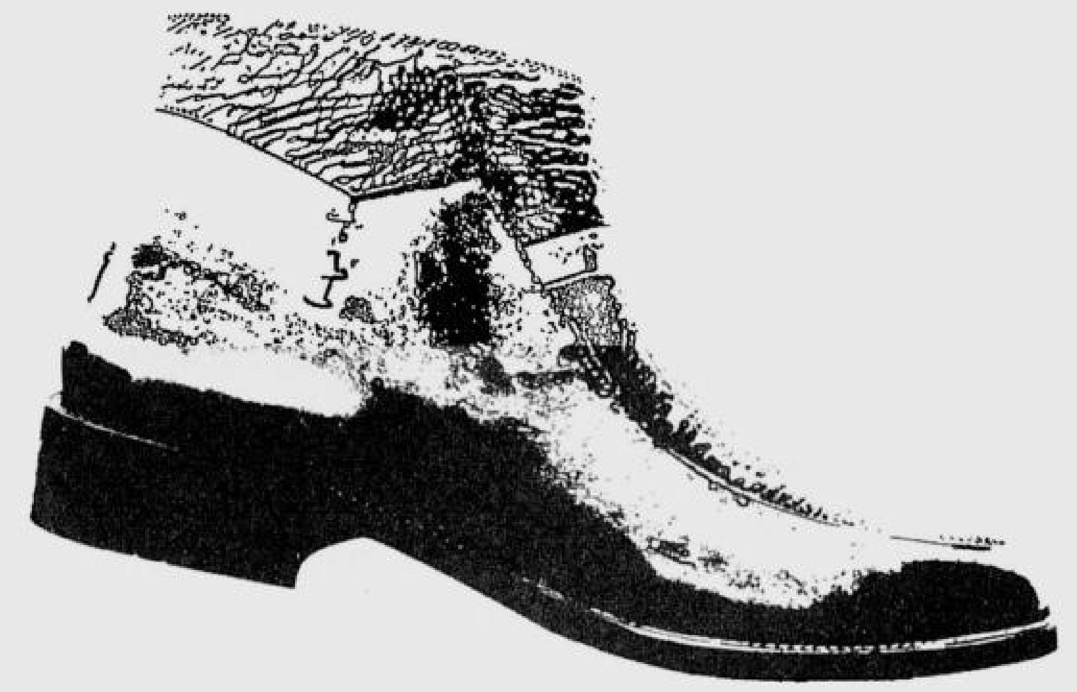

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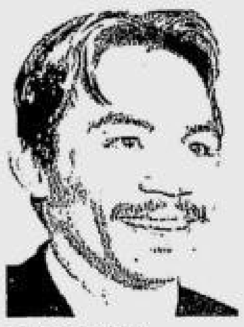
'Pacman' a poster boy vs drugs

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
Inquirer Mindanao



PACQUIAO

GENERAL SANTOS City—World renowned boxer Manny Pacquiao will be the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in Central Mindanao's poster boy against illegal drugs.

Supt. Edwin Minion, PDEA-12 chief, told reporters here he would be meeting with the Filipino ring icon who hails from this South Cotabato city to discuss details of the campaign.

The idea of making the world's currently most famous boxing hero an antidrugs crusader had originally come from PDEA Director Dionisio Santiago, Minion said.

Santiago had said during a visit here last month that Pacquiao could help ensure the success of the government's drive against illegal drugs because of his popularity, especially among the youth.

He also did not use drugs, Minion said, which would make Pacquiao a most effective PDEA poster boy.

"You will not become a Manny Pacquiao if you are a drug user. So I think his success atop the ring would have great influence, especially in the lives of our youth," Minion said.

The PDEA has stepped up its antidrugs campaign in Central Mindanao following reports the region had become a transshipment point for illegal drugs.

PO2 Jonas Badilla, PDEA-12 person, told reporters that based on police records, there were at least 300 people actively involved in the illegal drug trade in the region.

He said some of them were even policemen and government employees.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte had also tagged some prominent personalities in Central Mindanao as among those involved in the drug trade in the city.

RP tagged as violator of shelter rights; Noli cries foul

By Norman Bordadora and Cynthia D. Balana

THE PHILIPPINES HAS RECEIVED YET ANother black mark from the international community for rights abuse, this time for alleged violations of the right to shelter.

The Swiss-based Center on Housing Rights and Evictions named the Philippines as one of three recipients of its 2006 Housing Rights Violator Awards, along with Nigeria and Greece.

"The government of the Philippines continues to evict hundreds of thousands of people in the name of beautification and development with the urban poor being the worst affected," said Cohre executive director Jean du Plessis in a statement following the announcement of the dubious distinction in Geneva last Tuesday.

Cohre cited the recent demolition of shanties in Cebu which allegedly left 3,000 homeless—in aid of beautifying the Visayan city for the Summit of Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations being held there next week.

Rebuked

The Philippines was also rebuked for the eviction of 145,000 people to make way for the Northrail-Southrail Linkage Project and also for relocating the squatters to communities lacking in basic amenities such as water, electricity and sanitation.

Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), described Cohre's tagging the Philippines as a housing rights violator as "unreasonable, unfair and ridiculous."

"We have provided security of tenure to some 28,000 families, in locations that were chosen by the majority of the relocatees themselves. I'm not saying their situation now is perfect, but it's definitely better than the one they left behind," he stated.

The Cohre report on the Philippines also cited the allegedly unsanitary conditions in the relocation site in the Southville area of Cabuyao, Laguna where squatters evicted from the railroad tracks were transferred to make way for the Northrail-Southrail projects.

"Cohre's research reveals that most of the evictees have been moved to relocation sites where living conditions are appalling due to a lack of basic services such as potable water, electricity and sanitation facilities," Du Plessis said.

Relocation, not eviction

He said 12 infants and children have died this year in the Southville relocation site because of the unsanitary conditions and an outbreak of dengue.

De Castro objected to Cohre's use of the word "eviction" in the case of the families affected by the Northrail-Southrail linkage project.

He noted that even the Cohre itself acknowledged that the affected families were moved to relocation sites.

"That's not eviction, that's relocation," he said in a statement.

"There's a world of difference in the case of the North Rail and South Rail families. We did not forcibly eject them from their homes. We moved them from the railroad tracks to subdivisions where we provided them with home lots they could actually own. We gave them shelter security so the government can work on improving the railway system, which thousands of people depend on," the vice president said.

He said the relocation of families was voluntary and that they were adequately informed and consulted.

"The irony here is that if we had left those families in their cramped shanties and unsanitary slums along the railroad tracks, we probably would not be in this list of so-called housing rights violators," he said.

No intimidation

"We looked for in-city relocation sites as much as possible, or near the city in the case of Manila. And we did not intimidate the families to agree to the relocation," he said.

De Castro also denied Chore's claim that the relocation sites did not have services such as potable water, electricity and sanitation facilities.

He said that service providers have installed or are installing power and water facilities.

He said the process was being fast-tracked for all families to have individual connection to these facilities, which is being subsidized by the government.

"This is an improvement compared to their situation along the railroad tracks, where they had to resort to illegal connections," he added.

De Castro said the residents were being given livelihood assistance in the form of training, credit and loan assistance and even job referrals.

He said the HUDCC was regularly monitoring the resettlement site to ensure that the families were being adequately looked after, especially their health.

"If there's a problem, we work on it immediately. No one can rightfully accuse us of simply leaving these families to fend for themselves," he said.

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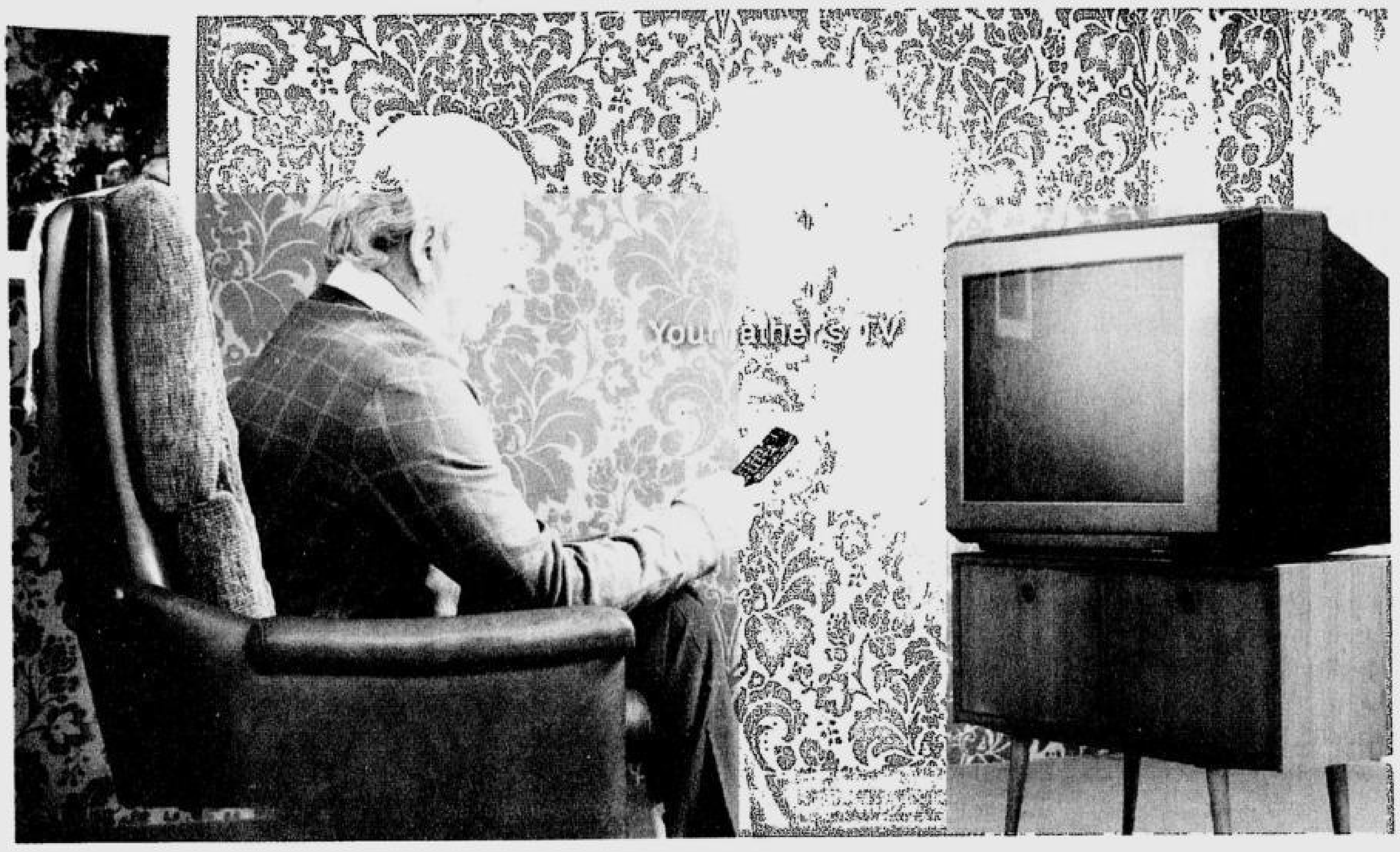

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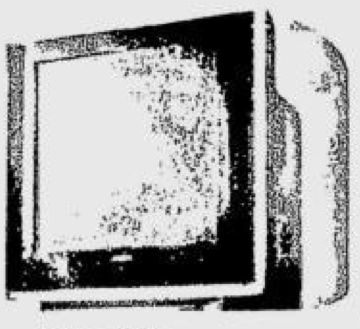

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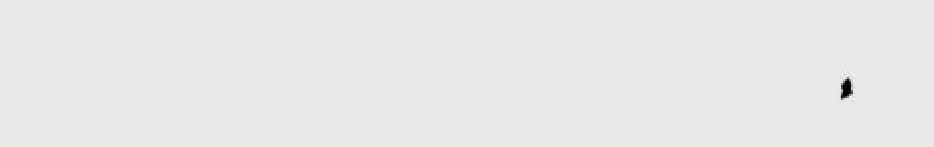

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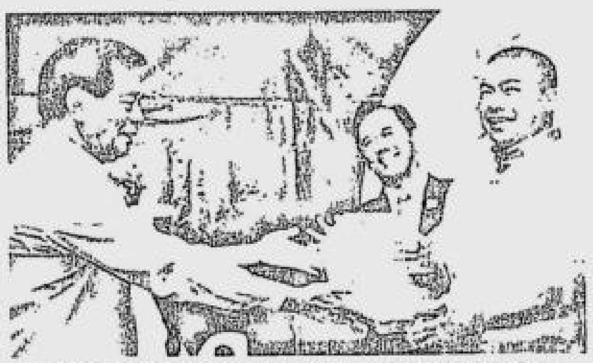
2006 LGLA Honors Outstanding Local Leaders

Oriental Negros Governor GEORGE P. ARNAIZ, Surigao City Mayor ALFONSO S. CASURRA, and Sabangan, Mountain Province Mayor JUPITER C. DOMINGUEZ were conferred the 2006 MOST OUTSTANDING Local Government Leadership Awards at the Senate last Nov. 29.


Mayor Dominguez receives his plaque as Most Outstanding Municipal Mayor from Sen. Pimentel and KBP Chair Nicdao

Mayor Casurra gets his plaque as Most Outstanding City Mayor from Sen. Pimentel, Sen. Angara and DAP VP Mendoza

Gov. ARNAIZ was honored as Most Outstanding Governor for bringing government service even to the remotest parts of the province. His creativity in developing, supporting, and implementing programs that uplift the quality of life of the people of Oriental Negros was noted as well as his ability to elevate the province to international recognition. The Awards commend the Governor's sincere public service that inspired the people of Oriental Negros to work together.

Governor Arnaiz holds his plaque as Most Outstanding Governor as Sen. Pimentel, Sen. Angara and UP Pres. Roman look on

Mayor CASURRA was cited as the Most Outstanding City Mayor for his prudent fiscal policies, his commitment to looking after the welfare of minorities and indigenous peoples in the city, and for advancing greater accountability and quality public service.

Mayor DOMINGUEZ was recognized as Most Outstanding Municipal Mayor for his leadership that embodies transparency and accountability and for exceptionally demonstrating that excellence can be achieved amidst scarcity. His leadership was instrumental in the preservation of the rich culture of the I-applai and Kankana-ey.

The three awardees received a cash grant of PhP100,000 and PhP1million worth of projects charged to the PDAF of Senator Pimentel.

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Gov. VICENTE B. BERMEJO
Province of Capiz

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Escalante City, Negros Occidental

Mayor FLORENCIO M. BERNABE, JR.
Parañaque City

Mayor RONALD ALLAN G. CESANTE
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Mayor MAXIMO M. ESTELA
Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte

Mayor JEORGE EJERCITO ESTREGAN
Pagsanjan, Laguna

Mayor LUIS A. FERRER IV
General Trias, Cavite

Mayor ALFONSO F. GAMBOA
E.B. Magalona, Negros Occidental

Mayor WINIFREDO B. OCO
Labo, Camarines Norte

Mayor JUANITO E. RENOMERON
Burauen, Leyte

Mayor FLORO T. TADENA
Sto. Domingo, Ilocos Sur

THE FINALISTS

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Province of Nueva Vizcaya

Gov. ROGELIO J. ESPINA
Province of Biliran

Gov. SALVACION Z. PEREZ
Province of Antique

Mayor MICHAEL V. FARIÑAS
Laoag City

Mayor EDWARD S. HAGEDORN
Puerto Princesa City

Mayor DAN N. LIM
Tagbilaran City

Mayor DEMOCRITO PLAZA II
Butuan City

Mayor GERARDO N. FLORES
Miagao, Iloilo

Mayor JESUS R. NALUPTA, JR.
Batac, Ilocos Norte

Mayor SIMPLICIO D. ROSARIO
Binmaley, Pangasinan

For more information,
*please contact the **Awards Secretariat** at the*
Center for Local and Regional Governance,
National College of Public Admin. and Governance,
University of the Philippines Diliman
*at **928-3914** and **925-7422**.*

About the Leadership Awards

The Local Government Leadership Awards (LGLA) is a biannual search for the Philippines' outstanding local leaders.

LGLA recognizes local officials who have demonstrated innovativeness and exemplary performance in their localities. Now on its third time, the award continues to recognize the achievements of local leaders who have made substantial contributions in improving the quality of lives of their constituents. It highlights best practices and lessons learned at the local level in the hope of encouraging innovation and creativity among local government leaders in problem solving and community building.

Awards were given for Most Outstanding Governor, City Mayor, and Municipal Mayor.

The LGLA follows these criteria in evaluating nominees: transparency, fiscal management and accountability, participatory governance, rule of law, organization and management, sustainability, and ethical, equitable, visionary, and political leadership.

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Mr. Austere A. Panadero (Assistant Secretary, DILG)
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US RELIEF goods for Bicol typhoon victims are unloaded from a Russian aircraft. JESS YUSON

US leads int'l relief for Bicol

By Nikko Dizon

RELIEF GOODS FROM THE UNITED States arrived on board a chartered Russian aircraft and were loaded on trucks donated by the Japanese Red Cross to reach the Filipino victims of super typhoon Reming in Bicol.

It can't get more international than that, noted Sen. Richard Gordon, who chairs the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC).

Last Wednesday, the South Korean ambassador, Hong Jong-ki, turned over a check for $100,000 to Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo.

Hong said his government considered it a moral obligation to provide humanitarian aid in times of calamity such as this.

Brazil and Slovenia have expressed their sympathy for the typhoon victims, the Department of Foreign Affairs reported.

According to Gordon, the donation from the US, made through the US Agency for International Development, illustrated the continuing partnership of the Philippines and the United States even as the two countries grapple with the issue of custody over a US soldier found guilty of raping a Filipino woman.

Relief handover

US Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney and Gordon were at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday for the handover of the $130,000 worth of supplies to the PNRC, which will distribute them to the typhoon victims.

The supplies included 200 rolls of plastic sheeting for shelter, 7,600 water containers and 7,000 family hygiene kits.

A group of US soldiers, including four Filipino-Americans, helped in unloading the cargo.

Among them was Col. Matias Velasco Jr., chief of the Joint US Military Assistance Group who is the head of the US military at the US Embassy. Velasco's own relatives in Camarines Sur were affected by floods.

Just a few days ago, the US gave $250,000 in cash to help relief organizations procure emergency commodities for the typhoon victims.

"Filipino people have stood by our side when American people have suffered natural disasters. We're doing the same here today," Kenney told reporters.

People to people

Asked if the conflict over the custody of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith would affect the US humanitarian response to the Bicol emergency, the ambassador replied:

"US-Philippine friendship and partnership has gone on for many, many, many years. This is the third natural disaster we have responded to this year in the Philippines and we will continue to do that. This is about people to people. This is a humanitarian effort. These are friends and colleagues who have suffered."

Gordon said it was "utterly ridiculous and rubbish" to read malice into the assistance being given by the US.

"You cannot put a price tag or an agenda for everything that is given especially during times of severe calamities, such as this. We are grateful to the American people and to the people who feel that they ought to help," Gordon said.

"I am not going to attach any political significance to this event whatsoever. Our people need this. And our people need justice. Those are two different things," he said.

The Philippine Mission to the United Nations has appealed for assistance from UN member states in a message delivered by Ambassador Bayani S. Mercado, the country's deputy permanent representative to the UN, before the General Assembly last Wednesday.

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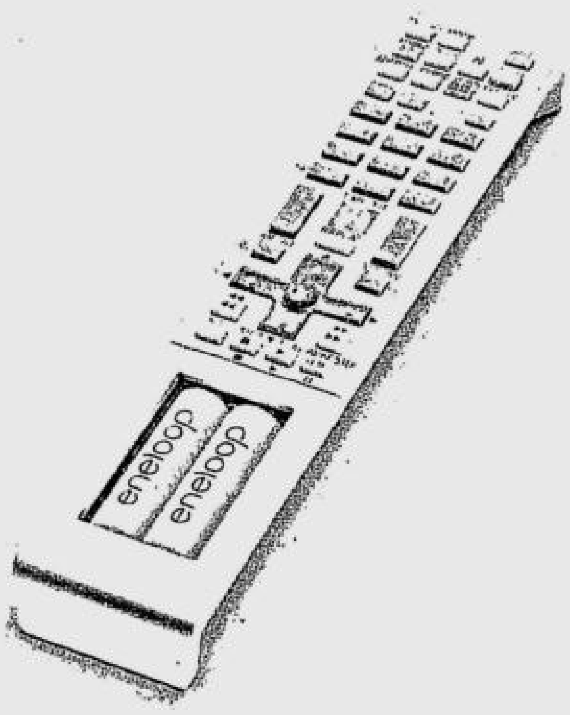

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No Christmas vacation for top BIR officials

By Cynthia D. Balana

INTERNAL REVENUE COMMISsioner José Mario Buñag yesterday cancelled the vacation leave this month of all top internal revenue officers, particularly those involved in collections, in a last-ditch effort to meet and, if possible, surpass, the bureau's P675.3-billion collection goal for 2006.

According to a memorandum issued by Buñag, frontline officers performing collection functions, directly or indirectly, are not allowed to go on leave for the entire month of December in order not to hamper the BIR's collection efforts for the next three weeks.

Buñag said the Bureau of Internal Revenue wanted to make good on its promise to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves to meet its collection target at the end of the year.

The BIR chief recently met with top bureau officials and collection personnel and directed them to fully implement existing tax measures and new initiatives to enhance revenue collections.

Working double time

Although the bureau posted a 22 percent increase in tax collections for the past 10 months against total cumulative collection in 2005, he said they had to work double time to meet, and possibly surpass, the P675-billion target.

"We are practically moving heaven and earth to attain our objective, and we have only three weeks to do it," he said.

Among the revenue-enhancement programs that the BIR has deployed this year are: the profiling of taxpayers, stock-taking of excisable taxpayers, benchmarking, rigorous monitoring of taxpayers' accounts, use of taxpayers' data, improvement of taxpayers' database, monitoring of tax compliance among withholding public and private agents, monitoring of one-time transactions (ONETT), monitoring of "No Operations Returns," implementation of the taxpayer compliance verification drive (TCVD), monitoring of non-filers/stop-filers, development of Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) cases and promotion of the "Premyo sa Resibo" lottery.

Tax mapping

Buñag said the bureau was still implementing effective collection schemes such as ferreting out unregistered businesses through the implementation of the so-called "48-hour notice for closure," particularly among those engaged in commercial dealings covered by the Expanded VAT Law, strict monitoring of Lotto outlets, cockpits, funeral services for potential estate taxpayers, LPG dealers, pawnshops, lending investors, retailers and millers.

He has also directed field officers to resume tax-mapping operations on businesses but also warned taxpayers against fake tax-mappers attempting to extort money from business and commercial establishments during the Christmas season.

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Contributions to the GREGORIA GO BELTRAN MEMORIAL FOUNDATION will now be gratefully accepted and acknowledged. A partial list of current projects is available upon request.

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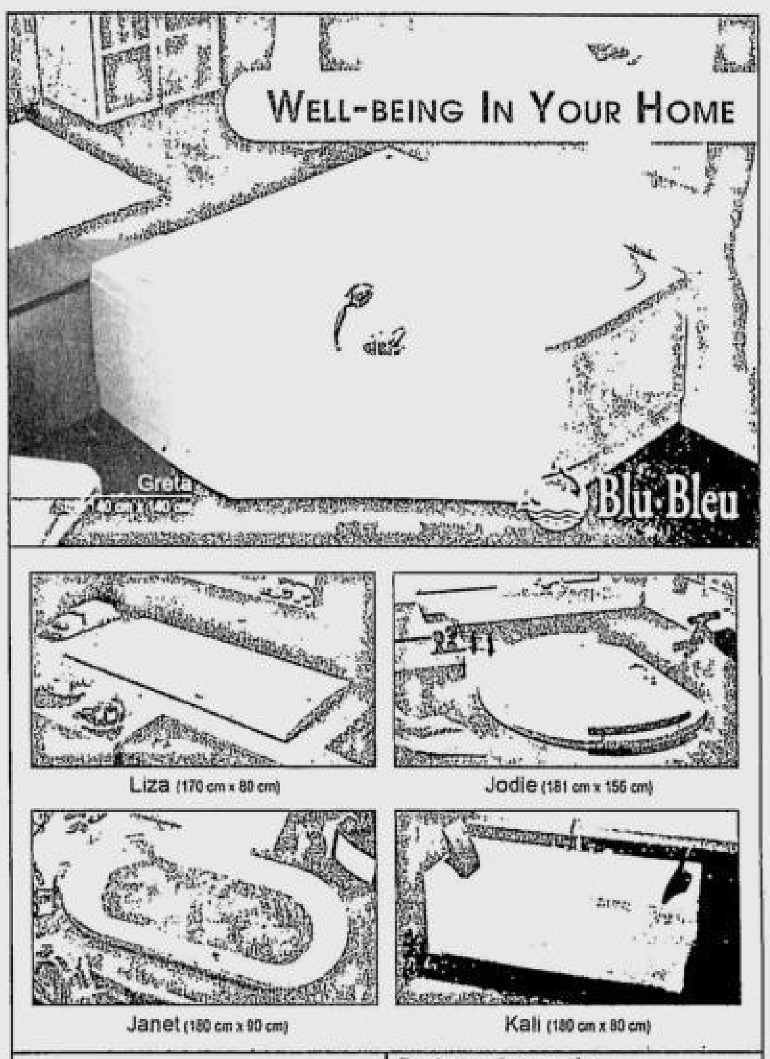
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Day 2 December 16, 2006
10:30 AM - Go Negosyo Day 1 Highlights • 11:50 AM - Awarding of the Inspiring OFW Entrepreneurs • 12:00 NN - FORUM 5: Go Negosyo, Negosyanteng OFW! (The Inspiring Entrepreneurs Forum) • 12:45 PM - Barcelona Movie Screening • 2:45 PM - FORUM 6: Pagpapatakbo ng Negosyo, Habang Ako'y Nasa Ibayo (Running a Long-Distance Business) • 3:35 PM - Testimony of Sandy Javier of Andok's Manok • 3:55 PM - FORUM 7: Pagpapahalaga Sa Sarili, Pamilya At Bayan; Susi Sa Pangmatagalang Tagumpay At Makabuluhang Negosyo • 6:00 PM - Game Show With Celebrities • 7:30 PM - Market! Market! Simbang Gabi

Day 3 December 17, 2006
10:30 AM - Go Negosyo Day 1 and Day 2 Highlights • 12:00 NN - Game Show With Celebrities • 1:00 PM - Sponsors' Segment • 3:00 PM - The Franchise Advantage - The Philippine Franchise Association (PFA) • 6:00 PM - Game Show With Celebrities • 7:30 PM - Market! Market! Simbang Gabi

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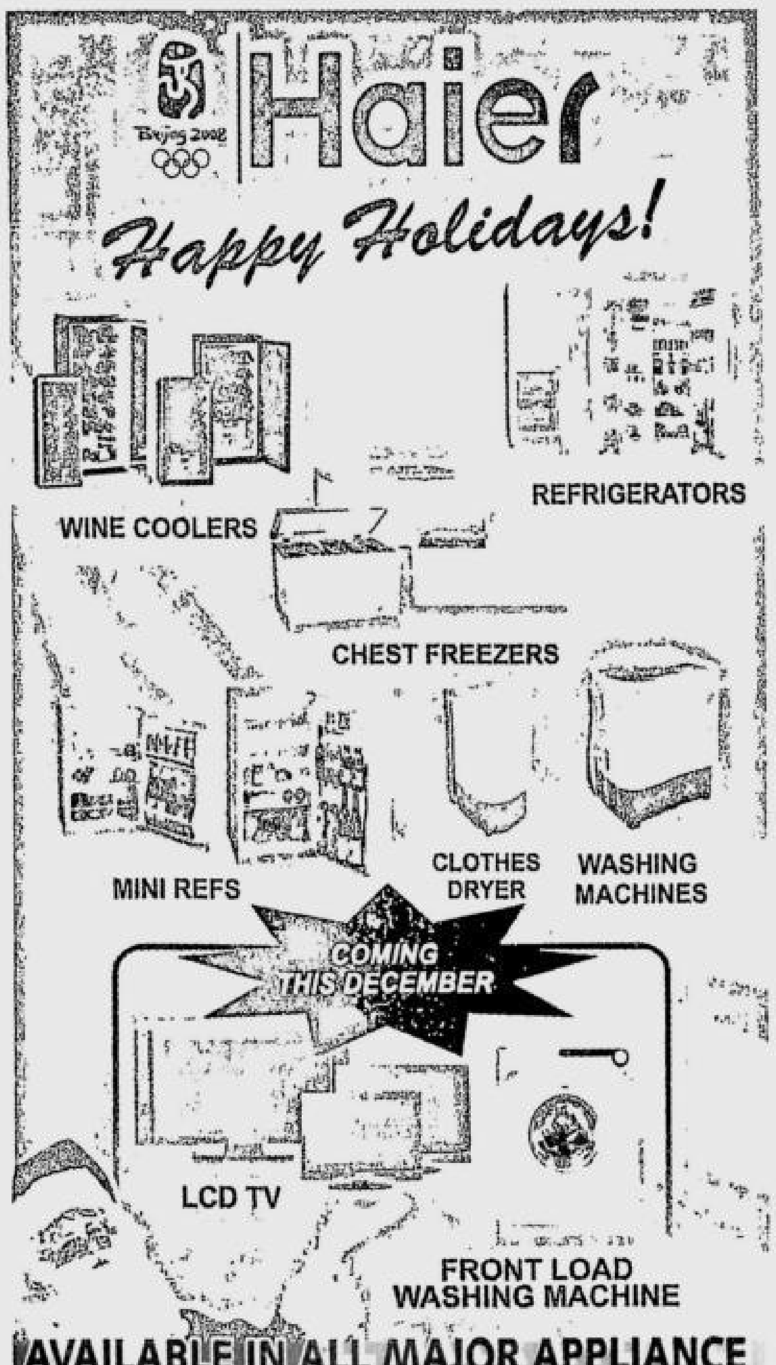
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No balance statement, no cash gift–Palace

MALACAÑANG HAS threatened to withhold the P5,000 cash gift it promised to government employees this Christmas if government agencies do not submit their cash balances by today.

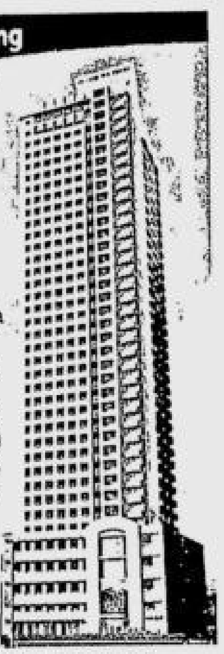
Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said the government needed the cash balance to finalize the funding for the cash gift which should not go lower than P5,000 for each of the over million permanent national government employees. The cash gift will also cover the 90,000 workers in government-owned and -controlled corporations and 350,000 employees serving in local government units.

Andaya said a number of government agencies have not heeded his request for a copy of their cash balances probably because they wanted to use their excess cash for other purposes.

Andaya said his department needed the cash balance to determine how much the government would shell out to fund the cash gift. "The government will only add money if an agency has excess cash," Andaya.

He said he was giving all agencies up to today to submit their cash balance report to facilitate the release of the cash gift by Monday.

The government has already fully paid the 13th month pay of government workers as of last month.



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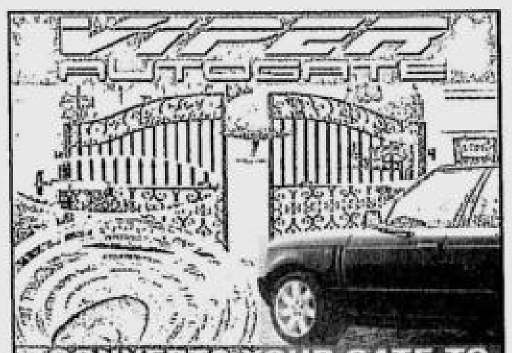

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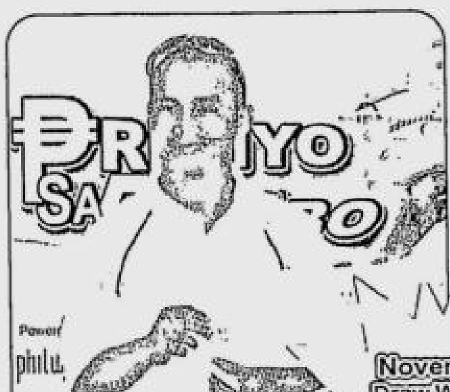

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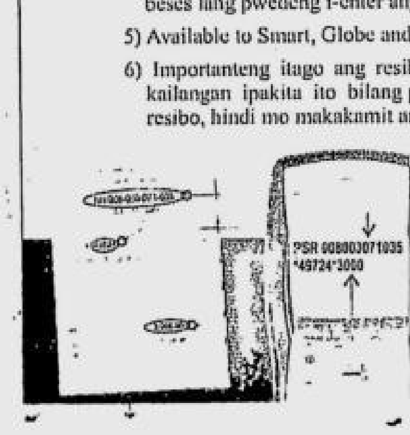

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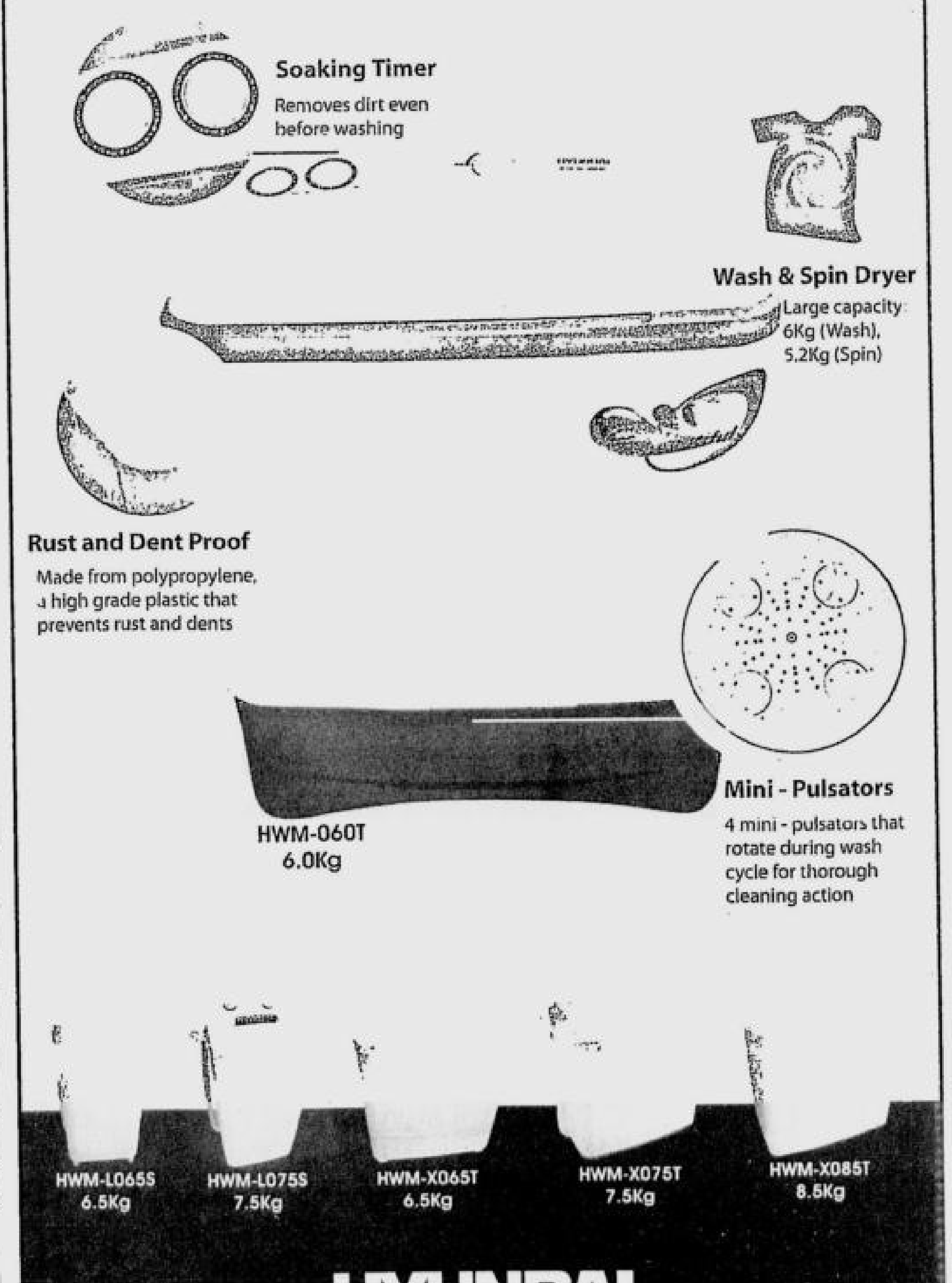

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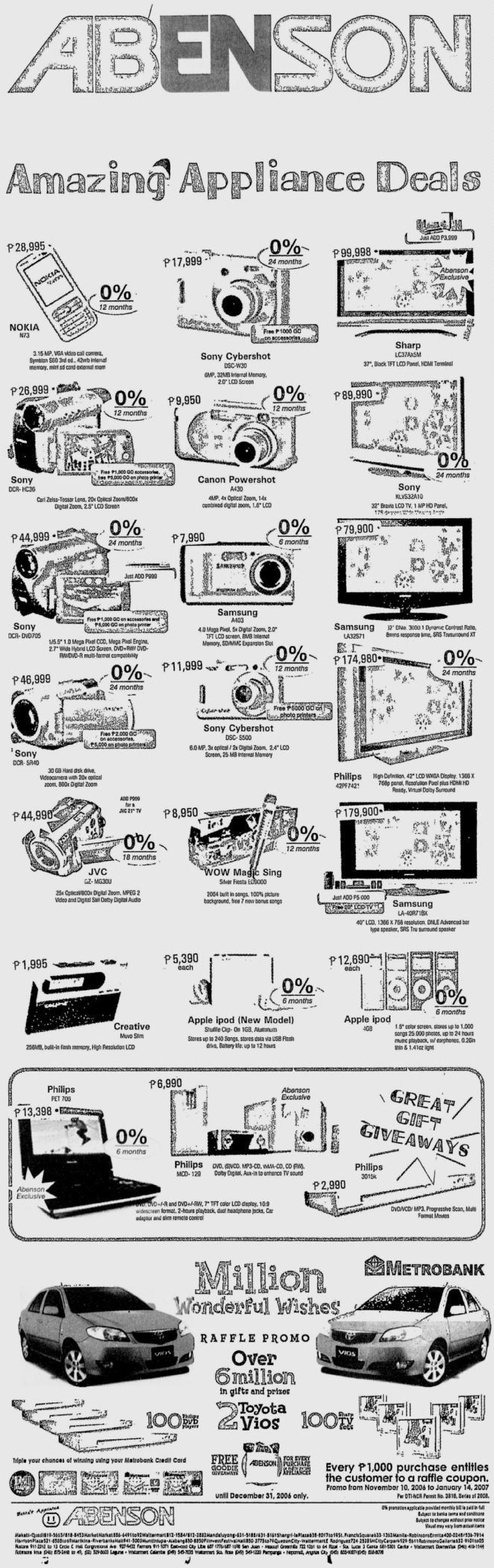
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Puno: Cha-cha, Con-ass 'like

From page A1

head of the high court.

"They can entertain that kind of opinion, but I think my record would speak otherwise," the new Chief Justice said.

A source close to Ms Arroyo earlier said that she was appointing Puno to the top post in the judiciary to ensure his support for Charter change.

Senators yesterday defended Puno's appointment from criticisms that this was a "quid pro quo" for his support of the administration's Charter change express.

Senate Pro Tempore Juan Flavier said speculations that Puno's appointment was a bargaining chip for his eventual vote in favor of the House-backed Con-ass, which is expected to be challenged by the Senate and civil society groups, were "unfair" to the man.

"Let's give him a chance. And when it comes to pass, let's make the judgment," he told reporters.

Flavier said Puno was a man of principle. "I've worked with him. I respect him and my sense is that he's going to abide by his principles."

De Venecia had said the House had the support of the high court, assuming that the seven justices—including Puno—would stand by their previous position on the petition by Ms Arroyo's allies to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative.

By a vote of 8-7, the Supreme Court had rejected the petition for a people's initiative on Oct. 25. One of those who voted for the majority decision was Artemio Panganiban, who stepped down as Chief Justice a few days ago.

Apples and oranges

Puno said that while he was consistent in his views on the people's initiative issue, there was a "big difference between the people's initiative and Con-ass."

"It's like comparing apples and oranges," he said.

Besides, he said, it was "almost impossible" to say at this stage "how the court or the individual justices will look into the issue."

Asked to comment on De Venecia's view that the House had him and the court on its side, Puno replied: "I will always stand for the Constitution and the rule of law. Our actions will be dictated by the Constitution, the mandate of the Constitution and that tells all."

Will he be beholden to Ms Arroyo, who appointed him to the top post in the high court?

"I am not conditioned to vote on the basis of who appointed me," Puno replied.

However, he thanked Ms Arroyo for naming him the 22nd Chief Justice of the high court, saying he accepted the appointment "with a clear awareness of the defining role of the judiciary as our people confront turning point after turning point in life."

Constituency of one

"The judiciary may not have the power of the sword, may not have the power of the purse, but it has the power to interpret the Constitution, and the unerring lessons of history tell us that rightly wielded, that power can make a difference for good," he said in a statement read before the press briefing started.

"With this acceptance, I pledge to do what is expected of me: To espouse no ideology but the rule of law. The judiciary has but one constituency and it is a constituency of one—the blindfolded lady with a sword unsheathed. She represents justice, fair justice to all, unfairness to none. I hope to be an instrument of this kind of justice," Puno said.

THE PUNO COURT begins a
on Thursday before Presiden
Executive Secretary Eduardo

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. and Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel voiced confidence that the Supreme Court, under Puno, would keep its independence from Malacañang and rule on the merits of any petition seeking to stop Con-ass.

"For now, it's not fair to say that the Supreme Court would look at this case on a political basis. I believe that the Supreme Court would take a fresh look at this case, and not be influenced by its ruling on people's initiative. I still believe in its independence," Villar said on dzXL.

False hopes

Pimentel said the Arroyo administration and its allies in the House were harboring "false hopes" if they thought they could influence the Puno court to rule in their favor.

"I have more faith in the integrity of Chief Justice Puno than the administration congressmen and women led by Speaker Jose de Venecia repose in him," he said, saying Puno "has more sense than what the modern-day cabalists led by GMA (Ms Arroyo) and JDV (the Speaker) would want him to do."

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said nobody could predict how the Puno court would rule on the case against Con-ass.

"I think that anybody can say that members of the court are sheep that could be led by the nose by any powerful person. These people have their own mind, that's why they are justices, and those are trained in the art of deciding cases, they decide cases on the basis of evidence," he said.

Sen. Richard Gordon, who took his oath before Puno, also attested to his integrity.

"He may not have agreed with us on the people's initiative, but I know him to be a man of rectitude, not easily swayed. He is a man of principle. A man of tremendous legal wisdom. A man who is conscious about the respect that is needed in the Supreme Court," he told reporters.

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Inquirer starts relief drive for st

From page A1

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New storm threatens Cebu party

From page A1

east of Southern Leyte as of 4 p.m. and was expected to make landfall on Saturday before moving toward Guian, Samar, on its way to Mactan and Cebu islands on Sunday.

"If this trajectory continues, then it will be a rainy opening for the Asean Summit," Pagasa forecaster Joel Jesusa said in a phone interview.

"By Saturday, we are expecting Seniang to be a typhoon with an intensity of up to 140 kph by Saturday," he said.

Presidents and prime ministers from 16 countries start arriving in central Cebu and Mactan on Saturday for the opening of the Asean Summit on Dec. 11 and the East Asia Summit on Dec. 13.

Protesters have complained of unnecessarily heavy security prepared for the gathering, with the Armed Forces of the Philippines pulling out troops from Jolo, Sulu, complete with their arsenal, to secure the venues.

Rains for 2 days

With Seniang moving west at 19 kph and having a huge circulation of 500 km, the troops may not be necessary to disperse protesters as rains are expected to.

"It's moving fast so there may be rains for two days during the summit," Jesusa said.

Based on its current direction and intensity, Seniang is likely to hit Samar, Leyte and Cebu next week but forecasters are optimistic the weather disturbance would be gone ahead of the Asean meeting.

"It's still over the Philippine Sea and will be fel either on Dec. 10 or 11," Pagasa weather branc chief Nathaniel Cruz said in a phone interview.

"It's not strong yet, and it may be in Visaya ahead of the summit … Because of the distanc from the Philippines, we expect that it will not affec any part of the country yet although it will brin rains to Bicol as it heads for Visayas," he said.

Still reeling from 'Reming'

Moderate to strong winds are still affecting Bicol, which has yet to recover from the impact of four typhoons that recently slammed into the region, destroying houses, toppling power and telecommunication lines, and isolating some villages.

Having fun is cheaper than living da

From page A1

fallen over the past decade, while the cost of living has soared almost a third, according to new figures.

Egg's "retail therapy index" (RTI)—which measures a basket of goods and services reflecting the nation's lifestyle—said the price of "fun" items, such as leisure and entertainment goods, had fallen by 0.6 percent in the past 10 years.

At the same time, average UK prices have increased by 30.2 percent, based on the Retail Price Index (RPI).

In the past year alone, the RPI has lifted 3 percent, driven by rising fuel and energy costs.

But fierce competition among retailers—supermarkets in particular—has meant the price of recreational and leisure items, as measured by Egg's RTI, have risen by just 0.9 percent.

Some items have seen startling price drops.

The cost of audio-visual equipment, such as iPods, televisions and sound systems, has tumbled 10.9 percent over the past 12 months.

The price of toys, photographic and sports goods has dropped 4.2 percent as supermarkets take on independent retailers, while electrical appliances now cost 2.2 percent less than they did a year ago due to online price comparison sites pushing prices lower.

However, some items have seen inflation-busting price rises.

Books and newspapers have increased in price the most—up 6.4 percent since this time last year, according to the analysis undertaken by the Center for Economics and Business Research.

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apples and oranges'

he takes his oath at the Palace Arroyo. Also in photo is Ermita. PCPO-MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Miriam Defensor-Santiago, ned out at the Judicial and Bar singled out Panganiban in lled a conspiracy to exclude shortlist of nominees to the e high court, conceded defeat Puno well.

ccepted her fate after Ms Arher in her home in La Vista n Quezon City on Wednesday

President filled me in, I agreed Reynato Puno deserves to be hief Justice. It appears that a party to the plot to keep me preme Court. On the contrary at Rey himself has been a vicernal scheming within the aid in a statement.

ulate Chief Justice Rey Puno m good luck. Let justice prehe plotters fall!" she added.

oice

majority also hailed the apf Puno as the country's Chief ng he is the "perfect choice"

for the ruling coalition in the ber, House Majority Leader Nograles, a lawyer, said Puno constitutional expert and "a n respect who stands his

chair of the House Committee even Panganiban spoke highly om he described in his book, uth," as someone "like a trained o) uses his pen with razor-like separate the excise fabrication d pretension from reality."

ocess, he gives life to populist libertarian ideals. Darting, gutte, he oftentimes wages lonely ist conventional wisdom with dissents and insightful opingrales, quoting Panganiban.

brushed aside speculations that Puno was chosen because of his favorable stand on Charter change.

He pointed out that Puno was the most senior among the nominees and current Supreme Court justices.

Intellectual force

He's also "known as the intellectual force" behind the high bench, said Nograles, himself a bar topnotcher.

He obtained his Bachelor of Science in Jurisprudence and Bachelor of Laws degrees from the University of the Philippines in 1962.

Apart from his sterling academic record at the UP College of Law, Puno obtained a Master of Comparative Law degree at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas; Master of Laws at the University of California in Berkeley, California, and Doctor of Juridical Science Degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, according to Nograles.

Prior to his appointment, Puno chaired the court's Second Division and the Senate Electoral Tribunal. He likewise headed the high court's Committee on Revision of the Rules of Court that drafted the Rule on Violence against Women and their Children, Rule on Legal Separation, Rule on Declaration of Nullity of Void Marriages and Annulment of Voidable Marriages, Rule on Adoption and Rules of Criminal Procedure, among others.

Decisions penned

Among his ponencias are the March 2, 2001 en banc ruling upholding the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency (Estrada v. Arroyo), the decision declaring unconstitutional Republic Act No. 8180 or the Oil Deregulation Law (Tatad v. DOE), and the first court ruling ordering the Lopez-owned Manila Electric Co. to refund its customers (Republic v. Meralco).

Puno was appointed to the high tribunal on June 28, 1993, by President Fidel V. Ramos.

Before entering the public sector, he was in private practice working as assistant attorney at the Gerardo Roxas and Abraham F. Sarmiento Law Office in 1962. He later joined his brother, the late Judge Isaac S. Puno Jr., at the Puno Law Office from 1969 to 1971.

In 1971, he was appointed solicitor in the Office of the Solicitor General. At the age of 32, he was designated Acting City Judge of Quezon City Branch II while concurrently serving as Solicitor in 1972. He was promoted to Assistant Solicitor General two years after.

Youngest CA appointee

In 1980, at age 40, Puno was appointed Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals. He holds the distinction of being the youngest appointee to the CA. He was reappointed Appellate Justice of the Intermediate Appellate Court (First Special Division) in January 1983. The following year, he was appointed deputy minister of justice. He was appointed CA justice on Aug. 1, 1986.

Puno is married to the late Supreme Court Clerk of Court Luzviminda D. Puno with whom he had three children, Reynato Jr., Emmanuel and Ruth.

orm victims

may be directed to Gina Santos, head of the Caritas Disaster Management Team at telephone numbers 563-9258 or 0919-8928226 or e-mail donate@caritasmanila.org. For updates on relief distribution, please log on to www.caritasmanila.org.ph. Please support this humanitarian apostolate.

Pagasa has advised the National Disaster Coordinating Council of the approaching tropical storm but said the rains may not be strong enough to halt relief and rescue operations in Bicol.

The region is still recovering from Supertyphoon "Reming," which slammed into the country last week. Over 1,000 people are feared to have been killed in a torrent of landslides and flooding.

Official figures on Thursday showed 570 people were killed and 746 are missing when Reming, packing winds of up to 265 kph, unleashed walls of volcanic debris, mud and floodwaters on villages on the slopes of Mayon volcano in Albay, around 350 km north of Cebu.

More than one million people in 13 eastern provinces were affected, and about 20,000 have gone to evacuation centers. The government has launched a massive cleanup operation with the help of foreign assistance.

Seniang may not be the last tropical storm to enter the Philippines, which is hit by around 20 tropical storms a year, Cruz said. *With reports from Reuters, AP*

y to day

Tobacco is up 5.7 percent, while cigarettes now cost 5.5 percent more.

In the past three months, CDs have seen the most striking change in fortunes.

While the average price of top 10 chart CDs has fallen 23.4 percent year-on-year, the cost rose 14.4 percent in the third quarter of 2006.

Shoppers should hold out for bargains in the final weeks before Christmas, as stores heavily discount goods, according to Egg.

Chief marketing officer Alison Wright said: "'Fun is cheap' is good news for Christmas shoppers, but not everything is as inexpensive as it might be."

"If you're buying presents, it makes sense to wait and see how much will be discounted. We'd urge people to be money smart in the shops," he explained.

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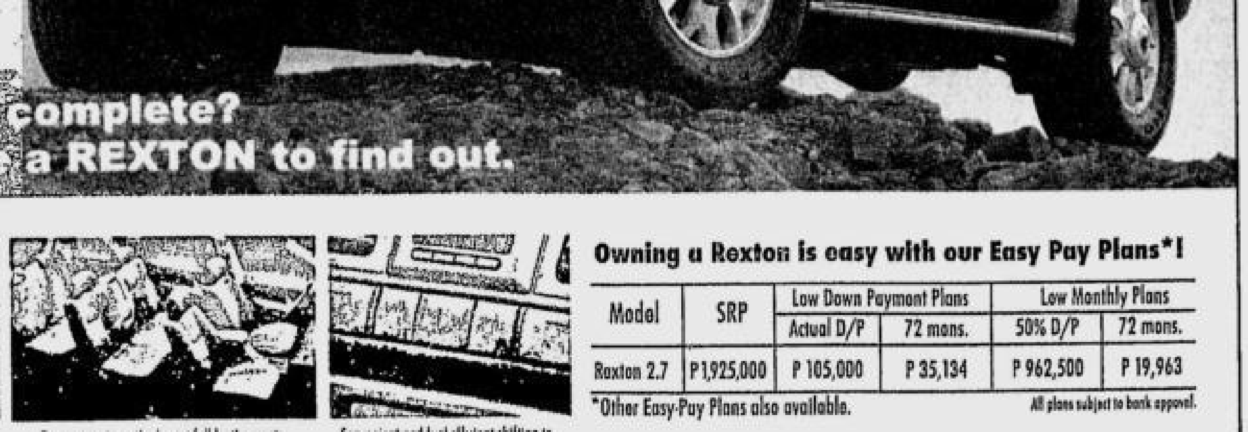

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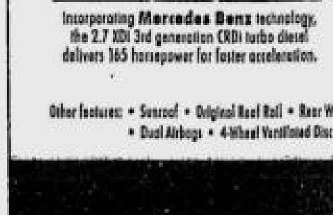

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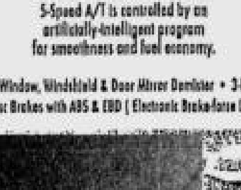

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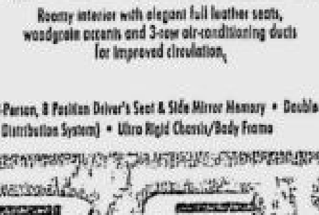

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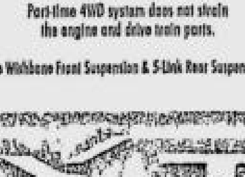

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OPINION

Hubris

THOSE WHOM THE GODS WISH TO DESTROY they first make mad, according to a saying attributed to Euripides. Over two evening-to-early-morning sessions, the leadership of the House of Representatives demonstrated two other sayings of that ancient playwright: Nothing has more strength than dire necessity; and a bad beginning makes a bad ending.

EDITORIAL

Tuesday was supposed to have resulted not only with the House amending its own rules on how to deal with resolutions. What it did was pass a resolution calling for a constituent assembly to convene. Clumsy handling by one of the presiding officers, Basilan Rep. Gerry Salappudin, and an attempt by Cagayan de Oro Rep. Constantino Jaraula to substitute a different text for the resolution he was supposed to sponsor thwarted the effort. What they had planned to accomplish in the dead of night had to be postponed for Wednesday evening.

The effort dragged until dawn broke on Thursday. Characterized in the past by a weak grasp of parliamentary procedure, the House minority made a valiant showing this time around. At times, the debates, which hit a low point in terms of crudeness and intemperate language Wednesday, carried a loftier tone. But the meatiness of the questions of some minority members and the responses of some administration congressmen could not disguise the single-minded legislative aggression that took place.

The aggression was aimed at the House's very own rules—and at hitherto sacrosanct notions of the very nature of our legislature itself. A few administration congressmen were honest enough to state that what is being attempted is unprecedented and unilateral. Others restricted their contributions to two simplistic and offensive points of view: first, that their having the numbers means they can do anything they want, at any time they wish; and second, that democracy consists only of tolerating expressions of dissent by the minority but ignoring every possibility for amending whatever it is the majority has put forward for approval.

Congressmen resent it when they are denounced for imposing the tyranny of numbers. But that is what happened—and is still happening. The proof was in the late-night approval by a bellowing majority of a clumsily phrased restatement by Salapuddin of a motion made by Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero. When the minority pointed this out, the session was suspended for some time.

The House leadership contends that the proposal it made last September to convene Congress as a constituent assembly must be pursued even without the Senate's cooperation. Both chambers have cooperated before—in 1946 to propose the Parity Amendment, and in 1969 when they agreed to convene as a constituent assembly (which was rejected by the people in a plebiscite). But now, the House refuses to be tied down either by tradition, precedent or generally accepted interpretations of law and basic political science principles. Instead, it asserts that so long as it has 195 votes, and has extended to the Senate the simple courtesy of an invitation to participate (but not as a co-equal body, but rather, in terms of individual senators being welcome to appear in the House if they wish), it can go it alone. No bicameral Congress anywhere has been so bold and so defiant in the face of generations of experience and expectations.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz, interviewed about an hour after congressmen staggered out into the sunlight, expressed concern over the consequences of the House's actions. The battle lines have been drawn, he said, and the country is headed for a revival of a different kind of parliament—of the streets—not to mention confrontations in the Commission on Elections and in the Supreme Court. The Senate nearly unanimously adopted a resolution of its own declaring that the two chambers must vote separately on any proposal to amend the Constitution.

Will the unique political animal to be born on Monday—a constituent assembly consisting of members of the House meeting in the same session hall under what will likely be the same presiding officer—be accepted by the people? And just because it insists it has legitimacy, will the public recognize it?

Enraged by the protests coming from the gallery, Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas screamed, "You are only guests! You are not even congressmen!" To which one lady in the audience replied, "We are citizens and we pay your salaries."

Like a cock crowing on a dunghill, loudly have House members proclaimed the stench of political victory. The public smells the odor of hubris—and finds it revolting.

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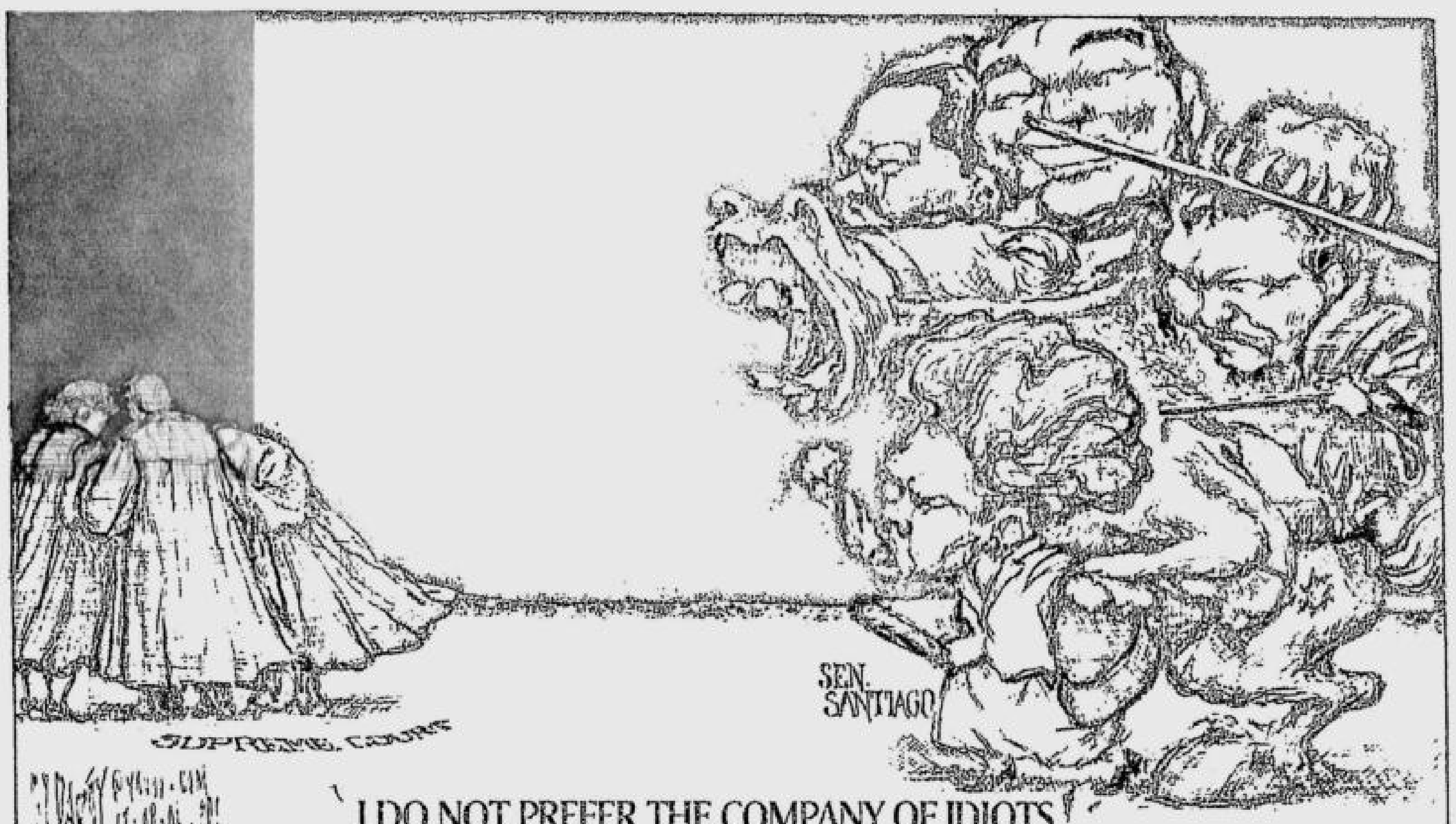

I DO NOT PREFER THE COMPANY OF IDIOTS!

Why don't we abolish the House instead?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT IS NOW CLEAR WHY WE SHOULD NOT allow changes in the Constitution at this time, when the changes would be made by incumbent congressmen. They have shown what they can do and will do once they grab power from the present bicameral Congress and transfer it to a unicameral Parliament. Through sheer force of numbers, they will bulldoze away all opposition to their wishes and railroad bills, never mind what the people think and deserve. We will see in the new Parliament frequent repetitions of their naked display of power at the House of Representatives the other night. Bills will be passed, not on the basis of merit, not because they are the best for the country, but because they have the numbers to ram their bills through the legislature; and not because they are what the nation needs, but because they are what the congressmen want.

Imagine, the congressmen revised their own rules to ram through the House a provision short-circuiting the established process of enacting laws, just so they can pass the resolution calling for a constituent assembly to revise the charter. Rules, tradition, ethics, morality and good taste were all thrown out the window. If they can do that now when we still have two houses of Congress, imagine what they will do when they have parliament all to themselves. They will behave like a gang of thieves. *Garapal talaga!*

If we really want a unicameral legislature, we should abolish the House of Representatives, not the Senate. Why abolish the Senate, when it is now the only power holding back the baying hounds of the House? If the new Constitution will abolish the House, the people are likely to vote overwhelmingly for it. That will save the taxpayers a lot of money otherwise spent for the salaries and allowances of congressmen, their staff, their offices, their vehicles, their traveling expenses, their *queridas*, and, most of all, their pork barrel which stands out as the biggest symbol of graft, corruption and all that is evil in that accursed House.

We really don't need a House of Representatives. All the legislation that we need can be crafted by the Senate. Bills of local application can be handled by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan. The House wastes so much time changing the names of streets and schoolhouses. Besides, we have the provincial and regional development councils to map out the infrastructure and development projects in their respective areas.

At present, the House often usurps the jobs of departments, particularly Public Works and Highways, Health, Education, Agriculture—in fact, every department and agency where there is money to be made.

Why should a congressman, for example, tell the DPWH what roads and bridges to construct, and to even dictate which private contractor should get the contract? The job of congressmen is to enact laws, but each one of them acts as de facto secretary of public works, health, agriculture, etc. Congressmen actually overrule the department secretaries when it comes to projects in their respective localities.

The reason, of course, is the kickbacks from contractors. The contractors kick back to the congressmen as much as half of the budget for a project. The cost of any project, therefore, doubles, while the congressman runs laughing all the way to the bank.

Congressmen say it is they who know first-hand the needs of their districts so they should be the ones to identify what projects to build. But isn't that the job of local government officials? A congressman who spends most of his time in Manila cannot know more about the needs of his constituents than a local official who lives and works with them in the province. Besides, there are the development councils of which the congressmen are members and therefore can propose projects for their districts.

Besides, the salaries, allowances and other perks the whole year round for more than 200 congressmen are a big drain on the treasury. If we spend the money used to maintain the House on building more homes for the homeless, schools and roads and bridges, the Philippines could be a developed nation quickly. Anyway, we don't need all the laws passed year in and year out by Congress. We need only a few of them and these can be done better by 24 senators instead of more than 200 congressmen who are always looking for ways to get rich.

Some countries have legislatures that make laws only part of the year, not the whole year like we have here. Necessary bills are compiled and then discussed when the legislatures meet. Of course, the lawmakers are paid only for the time they spend in session. This leaves the government a lot of money that it plows back to the people.

That also leaves the legislators enough time to spend in their districts and see the needs of their constituents first-hand. This saves not only time and money but also prevents legislators from grandstanding and wasting money. I think we should adopt that system.

The system that the administration and its allies are proposing only wastes time and money, but the above system also saves the energies of legislators. Right now, Congress passes a lot of laws that are not enforced, anyway. Many of these laws the people don't even know about. We now have so many laws, many of them contradictory, that the people haven't heard about. So many that even lawyers, judges and Supreme Court justices cannot agree on the interpretation of some of them. This results in almost endless litigation and sometimes in the miscarriage of justice.

When courts correct democracy's follies

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

WHEN THE POPULAR INSTITUTIONS OF Philippine democracy faltered, we turned to an unelected, non-representative Court as the surefire guarantor of our democracy—and each time, the Panganiban Court rose to the challenge.

During Artemio V. Panganiban's brief but historic watch as chief justice of the republic, several constitutional crises gripped the nation. It was his good fortune—the same fortune that blessed the shoeshine boy from the back streets of Sampaloc to become the highest magistrate of the land—that during his less than 12 months in office, the nation turned to the Court to answer the questions that divided us.

But it was our good fortune as a nation as well that the Supreme Court gave us answers that calmed our worst fears. With Panganiban at the helm, the Court spoke with one voice in two cases that pushed presidential power to its outer limits, namely, when they rebuffed President Macapagal-Arroyo when she banned executive officials from testifying before Senate inquiries and when her minions used the "calibrated preemptive response" to bludgeon protesting rallyists. He also shepherded the needed majorities against the "state of national emergency" and the bogus people's initiative, and staved off a constitutional showdown.

Significantly, during his retirement ceremony, he openly stated that President Arroyo never asked for anything in return for his appointment as chief justice and that, earlier, President Ramos, who first appointed him to the Court, "never even so much as hinted of his displeasure" when Panganiban ruled against Malacañang. It is not lost on us, of course, that more recently Ms Arroyo's partisans have not merely hinted their dismay. Leave it to Speaker Jose de Venecia actually to threaten to impeach Panganiban and Justice Antonio Carpio!

Yet it is one of those merciful wonders that, in our fledgling democracy beholden to patronage and Mafia-style politics, we find chief justices who spurn the appointing power. Hilario G. Davide Jr. was appointed chief justice by President Joseph Estrada, yet he later obliged Erap's successor, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and swore her in as president. Panganiban in turn owes his chief justiceship to President Arroyo, who even bypassed the pecking order of seniority in order to appoint him, and yet he stood obstinately in the way of Malacañang's schemes. I remain hopeful that newly appointed Chief Justice Reynato Puno will take the path laid down by his predecessors.

(Other GMA appointees also ruled against Malacañang in the Sigaw ng Bayan case: the *ponente* Antonio Carpio, Alicia Austria-Martinez, Conchita Carpio-Morales, Romeo Callejo and Adolfo Azcuna.)

Judicial independence begins with personal virtue, but it is in many ways also shaped by history. What we have today is the slow death of our political and representative institutions, and the judiciary merely steps into the vacuum by default.

If you have followed ANC's live coverage of the congressmen's shameless railroading of Charter change, you will understand why the courts have assumed the role of social safety valve. In order to change the Constitution in time to forestall the May 2007 elections, its masterminds have resorted to amending Congress' own rules of procedure. They will streamline the process, sidestep the usual committees and go straight to the plenary where the ruling coalition has the numbers to force it through. And most importantly, they are sure there will be no outrage, no indignation, from an apathetic and indifferent public.

We must remember another time when congressional maneuvers allowed an indecent change in our Constitution: the Parity Amendments, which gave US nationals preferential treatment in the exploitation our natural resources. Short of the required three-fourths vote, they made the congressional record show that the vote had been met, though they didn't count the votes of three senators and eight congressmen belonging to the Left-wing Democratic Alliance (among them Ramon Diokno, Luis Taruc and Jesus Lava) who opposed parity. In the landmark case Mabanag v. Lopez Vito, the Court washed its hands and upheld the twisted arithmetic. The justices, I am sure, are aware of the derision we have reserved for these brazen compromises.

His colleagues have hailed him as the "Renaissance Jurist," but Panganiban the jurist is best remembered in his own words:

"Proclamation 1017 [declaring a state of national emergency] may be a paper tiger, but … it has nuclear teeth that must indeed be defanged.

"Some of those who drafted PP 1017 may be testing the outer limits of presidential prerogatives and the perseverance of this Court in safeguarding the people's constitutionally enshrined liberty. They are playing with fire, and unless prudently restrained, they may one day wittingly or unwittingly burn down the country. History will never forget, much less forgive, this Court if it allows such misadventure and refuses to strike down abuse at its inception. Worse, our people will surely condemn the misuse of legal hocus-pocus to justify this trifling with constitutional sanctities."

"And even for those who deeply care for the President, it is timely and wise for this Court to set down the parameters of power and to make known, politely but firmly, its dogged determination to perform its constitutional duty at all times and against all odds. Perhaps this country would never have had to experience the wrenching pain of dictatorship; and a past President would not have fallen into the precipice of authoritarianism, if the Supreme Court then had the moral courage to remind him steadfastly of his mortality and the inevitable historical damnation of despots and tyrants. Let not this Court fall into that same rut."

World trade is at the final crossroads

COMMENTARY

Pascal Lamy

THE DOHA ROUND OF GLOBAL TRADE NEGOtiations is now at the final crossroads. Whether after five years of intense negotiations we take the last few steps to successfully complete the first Development Round in history, or give up and declare we have reached a dead end is up to the members, including the Philippines.

The costs—economic, systemic, political—of failure are acknowledged by politicians, business leaders and members of civil society. While we have recently attempted in Geneva to restart technical work, the negotiations remain basically stalled, as they have been since July.

The World Trade Organization and the global trading system which it oversees may not dissolve overnight if the Doha Round fails. But a failure to reach agreement is like an insurance policy not taken, or an investment not made. Insurance and investments are not free, but saving a bit in the short term often means paying much more down the line. Like a progressive malady, a failure in the global trade talks will erode the multilateral trading system that has underpinned the global economy for nearly 60 years.

Today the problem is agriculture. Representing less than 8 percent of world trade and less than 5 percent of employment in industrial countries, agriculture is the Gordian knot that has tied up negotiations in services, industrial goods and better trading rules. The European Union and the United States, in particular, must remove trade-distorting farm subsidies. Japan and Korea must open their agricultural markets. But key developing countries—like the Philippines—must also contribute.

Even by the most conservative measure, what has already been agreed over the last five years surpasses anything agreed on a trade round before. Pledges to cut trade-distorting domestic farm subsidies surpass those made in the last WTO round of trade talks—the Uruguay Round—by two to three times. Governments have agreed to end the direct export subsidies that have so damaged farmers in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Governments have agreed to use powerful formulas to cut import taxes on farm and industrial goods, ensuring that a Doha Round agreement would tear down trade barriers as never before. In services, the largest economies in the world have agreed that they will remove restrictions and create new business opportunities for foreign providers in many sectors including telecommunications, express delivery, banking, insurance and computer services.

Environmentally harmful fisheries subsidies, which have contributed significantly to the depletion of global fish stocks, would be cut for the first time ever. Trade and environment policies, so inadequately coordinated in the past, would be made coherent. New rules would be created to streamline customs procedures, slash red tape and curb corruption.

Lack of progress in the multilateral trade talks has already led many governments to consider bilateral or regional accords. These deals offer much less than a global pact. They do not address systemic issues like farm or fishery subsidies, anti-dumping or trade facilitation procedures. They create a myriad of different rules and procedures which mean higher administrative costs for entrepreneurs.

An end to the Doha Round would also bring great comfort to those promoting a protectionist agenda, because the WTO is the greatest insurance policy against trade conflicts.

We have only the next few months to rescue these negotiations. The United States Congress will consider two pieces of legislation that will have profound consequences on the Doha talks: a new farm bill and a bill to extend or renew the trade negotiating authority that Congress extends to President George W. Bush. By March next year, negotiators in Geneva must advance the negotiations sufficiently to inspire Congress to pass laws which support the talks.

The responsibility to be flexible and seek compromise is not Washington's alone. Other major players—Europe, India, China, Brazil, Japan and the Philippines—must move, too. But time is short and the stakes are high.

The WTO system has greatly benefited the Philippine economy. Philippine exports have risen by an impressive average of 9 percent a year since WTO's creation in 1995, reaching $41.3 billion last year. At the same time, market-opening measures have encouraged national competitiveness and lowered prices for consumers.

A brighter economic future for the Philippines depends on more, not less, world trade.

Pascal Lamy is director general of the World Trade Organization.

Mary and Nicole

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AS THE MOVIE "THE NATIVITY STORY" SHOWS us, the story of the birth of Jesus really begins with one young woman's courageous assent to God's plan for her.

Going by our Christian faith, if Mary had not said yes, had she not accepted the Angel's message that she had been chosen to bear the Messiah, there would have been no Jesus Christ, no Nativity Story and no salvation for all humankind.

I have always wondered why of all the women in Judea at that time, God would have chosen a teenager (tradition says Mary was 14 at that time) from a family with a proud lineage but poor materially, and yet unmarried though betrothed to a carpenter named Joseph. Why her, and why not a married woman like Mary's cousin Elizabeth, who had been promised a child in her old age? After all, making Mary the mother of the Savior would place her in grave physical danger, and not just from the soldiers of King Herod who was afraid of a popular uprising once his oppressed subjects found hope in the coming of the Messiah. At that time, an out-of-wedlock pregnancy was considered a grave offense deserving of death by stoning, as was until recently the practice in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Mary faced not just ostracism and punishment from her neighbors, but also loss of face and even expulsion from the community, especially if her fiancé denounced her and rejected her.

Then again, perhaps by his choice of a human mother for his Son, God was making a point about his Son's coming to the world to save not the high and mighty, but the poorest, weakest and least powerful. For in those times, no one could have been poorer, weaker and more powerless than a girl from a destitute family, finding herself pregnant before marriage.

* * *

DESPITE her vulnerability, though, God still needed (or felt He needed) to ask Mary's permission before He could make her a mother. And from the depths of her soul, despite her inexperience and innocence, for she had "known no man," as she told the Angel, Mary found the courage to say yes.

She said yes not just to pregnancy and motherhood, not just to God's plan for her, but also to a life of hardship and grief. She said yes to a life led on the run, with the king's soldiers at her heels. She said yes to a lifetime of challenging authority as her son would do in his maturity, while bearing a beacon of hope for her despairing people. It was clear she knew the implications of her simple yes, as her "Magnificat" reminds us. And yet, with Joseph by her side, Mary took on and accepted wholeheartedly a future of uncertainty and challenge.

We celebrate today the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. As a child, I always thought the feast was meant to celebrate Mary's "virginity," which our Religion teachers insisted was still "intact" even if she had given birth to Jesus, and was never breached despite her marriage to Joseph. Only later would we learn that today's feast is actually to commemorate the papal teaching that Mary, as the mother of God, was born "without original sin."

* * *

AND yet, Mary's continuing "chastity" is a prevailing belief, so much so that even the filmmakers of "The Nativity Story" dared not show even a hint of a carnal relationship between the human parents of the Son of God.

I thought the movie was at heart a love story, a love story where the pair of lovers overcome social expectations and doubts about each other to form a loving partnership for a greater cause. And yet, even when it would have been perfectly natural for Mary and Joseph to kiss—even chastely—or embrace or even hold hands, the filmmakers shy away. No wonder the movie was applauded six times when it was shown in the Vatican, reenforcing as it did all the myths and biases of ages. If they were going to rehash Nativity scenes and freeze the camera (and concepts) in typical Christmas card scenes, I wonder why the filmmakers bothered to make a new movie on this story at all.

Which brings me, and I know it is quite a conceptual leap, to "Nicole" and the continuing controversy surrounding the Subic rape case. When the story first hit the headlines and details slowly filtered out, most everyone I talked with, and most of them were women, came down hard on Nicole. They decried her drunkenness, her demeanor, even the fact that she was in a bar at all. No one—and I mean no one—ever denounced Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith and his cohorts. Everyone seemed to find it inevitable, even natural, for an American Marine, or any man for that matter, to take advantage of a young woman who was so smashed she couldn't even walk straight.

* * *

IF, as her critics, including a Catholic bishop, think Nicole had it coming, what do they say about Smith's behavior? If it is wrong or foolish for a woman to get drunk and dance with strangers, isn't it more wrong for adult men to take advantage of her, load her into a van and have sex with her over her drunken protestations?

If, at any point, a woman says no and the man insists on having sex anyway, it is rape. No means no, whether said sober, drunk or drugged.

If men are "natural" aggressors, and women "inevitable" victims, then nothing women can do—wearing concealing clothing, behaving decorously or staying at home—can protect them from rape. And yet we know that not all men are rapists or drunken louts, and that women have the right to refuse unwanted sexual advances. But why do we accept this stereotype, blame the woman and absolve the man?

Even God had to wait for Mary to say yes. Smith and his friends didn't even bother to get Nicole's assent. And if this was Mary's time, all of Nicole's critics blaming her for the crime done to her, would be leading the pack of judgmental neighbors hurling the first stones.

Aguinaldo in the eyes of a British major

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

DURING A VISIT TO THE MALACAÑANG MUSEum recently, I saw photographs of the young Emilio Aguinaldo when he was in Malacañang, not as lord of the manor and president of the First Philippine Republic, but as a guest of the American military governor. If we are to be more precise, he was a prisoner, having been captured in Palanan in 1901. As I wondered which room he occupied, I also wondered what other bits and pieces of history occurred there. It was one of the times I literally wished aloud, "If only the walls could talk."

In the past two weeks, I have been guiding my students through primary source documents in order to give them an experience, though limited, of how a historian works. We have discussed how we must be conscious and critical of bias and point of view to understand that documents, more often than not, do not speak by themselves and that they need a reader to give the text some sense or meaning. I often wish aloud that I were born 50 years earlier, or sometimes even a century earlier, in order to interview the people who made the Philippine Revolution and gave birth to the Filipino nation. I read through texts and wonder what it would be like if other details were recorded, like tone of voice and facial expression. All these things make up the record of the past, but they are usually left out of the narrative.

The National Historical Institute has reprinted "The Philippines and Round About" by the British Major G.J. Younghusband, which is a delight to read. Originally published in 1899, it contains a little known account of a meeting with Aguinaldo in Malolos, then the capital of the Philippines. Younghusband had traveled from Manila to Bulacan early in the morning and waited for hours to meet with Aguinaldo, and then he was ushered into a room where he found the president by a table filled with books and papers. We have no transcript of the conversation, but the [illegible] he provides is as close as we can get to being there:

"The great man rose and advanced a few steps to meet us, and in a quiet and dignified manner said he was glad to make the acquaintance of an English officer. Aguinaldo is a young man of only twenty-nine years of age, stands about 5 feet 4 inches in height, is slightly built, and was dressed in a coat and trousers of drab tussore silk. He is a pure Philippine native, though showing a slight trace of Chinese origin, of dark complexion, and much pock-marked. His face is square and determined, the lower lip protruding markedly. On the whole [he is] a man of pleasant demeanor, even-tempered, and with strong characteristics. Slow of speech, and perhaps also of thought, his past career has hall-marked him as a man of prompt decision and prompter action.

"Many people, and amongst others, Admiral Dewey, were much puzzled to find so quiet and apparently unintelligent and listless a young man the acknowledged and undisputed head of so great a movement. Many thought that he was a mere puppet in the hands of stronger men, others that he was a safe, weak man bolstered up by strong conflicting powers on all sides, much in the way that Switzerland as a nation is bolstered up in Europe by strong powers on all sides. But a remarkably prompt action served to show that Aguinaldo was no puppet, but sailed decisively on his own bottom. A short time ago, it appears that another of the insurgent leaders began to secure a following which bade fair to shake the supremacy of Aguinaldo. The President [illegible] take no half measures, attempted no parleying; he grasped the nettle firmly, and ordering his reputed rival out into the courtyard, had him shot on the spot."

One wonders if the above refers to Antonio Luna or someone else who is lost to history. Aguinaldo showed some memorabilia including a standard taken from the enemy by the young Gregorio del Pilar, who is not mentioned by name but described as a 21-year-old general. Independence was also discussed thus:

"In the course of conversation, the subject of an American protectorate came up. Now up to this date both Aguinaldo and the men of influence around him had openly declared that it was their wish to start their new life under the protection of a recognized power, and preferably under that of the American nation. But on this day, October 31st, Aguinaldo most emphatically declared that he and his followers had fought for complete independence, and that they would shed the last drop of their blood in securing it. These were practically his very words, and forsaking his quiet demeanor, he went so far as to thump the desk with his fist for emphasis. This was a most weighty utterance, and if seriously meant was tantamount to a declaration of war against America should the result of the Peace Conference include a provision that the Philippine Islands were to be handed over to that power."

There are some light moments in this interview that included discussions on guns, cannons and ammunition. Aguinaldo's 7-year-old son ran about the office dressed in cute military uniform.

The above account contains more human interest than actual history and can be considered trivial by academic historians, but if we do not know what Aguinaldo was like as a man, we cannot fully understand what he was like as a hero and historical figure.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Our Islamic heritage

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHAT A DELIGHT, AND A RELIEF, IT WAS THAT THE Pope's trip to Turkey helped to advance Muslim-Catholic (and Christian) dialogue. There was much tension before he left, with many Muslims still hurting from a lecture he delivered in Germany last September, which was interpreted as being anti-Islam. The Pope later expressed regrets but insisted he had been interpreted out of context.

The Pope visited two major mosques in Turkey, considered significant because he was only the second pope, after John Paul II, to have entered Muslim places of worship. Those visits were not without risk, considering that more dogmatic Muslims might have interpreted it as blasphemous intrusion. When John Paul II visited the Hagia Sophia in 1967, he caused some controversy because he had knelt and prayed. Pope Benedict was more cautious.

Educational

The papal trip was well covered by Al Jazeera, the Arabic cable TV network, which could help to project a more benign image of Christian leaders to Muslims. Conversely, I hope the coverage on CNN and BBC helped to educate non-Muslims on Islam.

Even CNN's anchor persons audibly gasped in awe as their cameras panned the grand interiors of the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque. The Hagia Sophia still has an image of the Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus, amid inscriptions praising Allah, all reflecting its colorful history. First built in the 6th century as a Byzantine church, it was converted into a mosque when Muslims took over, and finally transformed into a museum in 1935 after Turkey became a secular state.

CNN also featured the Pope's visit to a stone house near the city of Ephesus, supposedly where the Virgin Mary spent her last years. It is a popular pilgrimage site for Catholic Marian devotees as well as Muslims. Jesus Christ is, after all, considered a great prophet by Muslims, and his mother is particularly loved.

There's so much more that needs to be done to educate Christians and Muslims about each other's religions, including the legacies we share. Writers sometimes refer to Jews, Muslims and Christians as the "three religions of the Book," referring to our sharing of the Old Testament.

'Mabuhay'

Much has been said about the prejudice Christians in the West have for Muslims, fueled in part by stereotypes such as Hollywood portrayal of "Arabs" as sinister-looking characters. Islamophobia, the irrational fear of Islam, is often mixed with this Arabophobia, with few people realizing that "Arab" refers to people living in several countries, and of different faiths, including Christianity.

Filipino Christians have picked up much of this fear of Muslims and of Arabs partly because of our turbulent history of conflicts in Mindanao. Now, with large communities of Muslims in most major urban centers of the country, Christians are learning to live with Muslims but the relationship is still one of uneasy co-existence.

We could defuse some of the suspicions we have of each other if we could just look for our common heritage. Christians, in particular, need to give more attention to how "Filipino"—as a language, a people, a nation—is itself infused with an Islamic heritage without many of us knowing about it.

Last October, I wrote a column about how important the word "*mabuhay*" is for Filipinos. I wasn't able to trace the origins of this use, so I'm grateful that professor Julkipli M. Wadi of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Islamic Studies wrote to remind me that "*mabuhay*" is derived from Arabic.

The professor points out that "*hay*" in Arabic means life. "*ma*" connotes "presence," a way of saying "there is" or "it is." Thus, as "*maganda*" means "there is beauty," "*mabuhay*" would mean "there is life."

And what about "*bu*"? Wadi isn't sure here, but notes that the Tausug word for life is "*buhi*." He proposes that "*hi*" or "*hih*" is an indigenization of the Arabic "*hay*," while "*bu*" could have been added for emphasis, like English has "indeed." So "*buhi*" (the word for life not just in Tausug but many other Philippine languages) and "*mabuhay*" could mean "there is, indeed, life."

Wadi notes, too, that our words for death—"*patay*," "*nakapatay*," "*mamatay*"—are derived from the Arabic "*mawt*."

I've already mentioned that "Arab" isn't synonymous with Muslim, but in our context, the entry of Arabic words into the Philippines happened because of Muslim missionaries who reached our shores several centuries ago. So the Arabic loan words come in as part of an Islamic legacy.

The borrowing of such basic words as those for life and death most probably occurred in the context of religious and philosophical exchanges. Wadi points out that the Islamic perspective of life has at least five stages, as described in the Koran (II:28): nothingness, life, death, resurrection and Final Return. He writes: "Life in Islam must be celebrated and death is not necessarily an end but the beginning of a more pure, blissful, eternal life."

He mentions other Filipino words of Arabic origin, including "*kaluluwa*" (soul, from the Arabic "*ruh*") and "*hukom*" (judge from the Arabic "*hukm*" for judgment) and notes how so many of the loan words are in the realm of psychology and spirituality. Even the expression "*ala e*," particularly popular in the Southern Tagalog region, is from "Allah," the Islamic and Semitic name for God.

Our Islamic expert also mentions "*simbahan*" as coming from the Tausug "*sumba*," which in turn is derived from the Arabic "*subha*" or praise. So, we owe the Muslims this important word, and concept, of worship as praise.

When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, Islam had already reached different parts of the islands, including Manila. Catholicism eventually became the dominant religion but, ironically, became another channel for Islamic influences. Spain, after all, was once occupied by the Muslims or Moors, who left a strong influence in the arts, from architecture to music. Alicia Coseteng writes in "Spanish Churches in the Philippines" about the Muslim influence in Bohol and Cebu churches. One church in Carcar, Cebu, even has those onion-shaped domes or cupolas and four-cornered hat roofs that we usually associate with Islamic architecture.

Coseteng also refers to "Moorish" influences in the churches' interiors, mainly the elaborate floral and geometric patterns. Islam discourages graven images in places of worship, so it's not surprising that mosques seem so bare—until you notice the walls, floors and roofs, covered with the most intricate of ornamentation.

Ornate design is sometimes described in English as "arabesque," its root word telling you where it all started. Who knows? The Filipino penchant for *borloloy*, the almost excessive side decorations on everything, from our clothes to our jeepneys, may have similar arabesque origins. ("Borloloy," if you're wondering, comes from the Spanish "*borla*" or a tassel, so a *borloloy* person looks like someone with a lot of tassels and accessories.)

Beyond "*ala e*" and "*mabuhay*" and Pinoy arabesque, there's much more to our Islamic heritage waiting to be rediscovered.

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SIGNING OF
HEALTHCARE PROGRAM AGREEMENT

HONDA Cars Kalookan recently signed the renewal of its healthcare agreement with MEDICard Philippines. (seated L-R) MEDICard's Dr. Voltaire R. Victoria (Sales & Business Dev't. Mngr.) and Dr. Nicanor D. Montoya (President) with Honda's Phillippe John Fetalvero (GM & CEO), Rosita Yu (Chief Finance Officer) and Yvette delos Santos (HRMA Mngr.). (standing L-R) MEDICard's Miguel Cesar Jardiel (Supervisor Account Mgmt.) with TSG Life & Health's Joanne Feliciano (OIC), Evelyn Domingo (Operations Mngr.), Honda's Jophen Rualo (HRMA Supervisor), Chit Maguddayao (HR Asst.), Jae Elleazar (MIS Mngr.) and Theodore Padolina (Service Mngr.).

ADVT

Will US bar Al Jazeera?

AL JAZEERA, THE ARABIC SATELLITE TELEvision network based in Doha, Qatar, which broadcast video statements from Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaida leaders, has put the United States, as well as the United Kingdom, in a dilemma.

Al Jazeera (launched in 1996) now maintains and operates—aside from its headquarters in Qatar—several specialized television channels in Washington, D.C., London, Athens, Buenos Aires and Kuala Lumpur; and it broadcasts news not just in Arabic, but also in English, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Al Jazeera has, in fact, pirated a number of respected news anchors and journalists from CNN and BBC (not to mention the US Central Command).

CNN, BBC, Fox News and CNBC will no longer enjoy a monopoly of international opinion-making, as they will have to share the international (and domestic) airwaves with Al Jazeera, which will be presenting news about the Arab world (especially Israel) from the Middle East perspective.

A rousing debate is now raging in the United States—whether or not to allow Al Jazeera access to cable TV. This is expected by some to further heighten the paranoia and neurosis of the Americans, particularly with regard to their "War on Terror."

The Americans seem to be caught in a Catch 22 situation here: If they allow Al Jazeera to gain access to cable TV and thereby "subvert" and "corrupt" the minds of the American viewing public, what happens to official propaganda?

If they refuse access, what happens to the much-vaunted American ideals of freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of choice and freedom of information? Are these freedoms to be applied selectively?

While many Arabs can understand and do speak English, how many Americans can claim Arabic linguistic proficiency?

Have the Arabs outwitted the great United States? Or, is Al Jazeera a CIA front?

We shall find out, soon enough.

—VICTOR N. ARCHES II,
179 Pilar St., Addition Hills,
San Juan, Metro Manila

Bring back 3 US Marines

CONGRATULATIONS TO JUDGE BENJAMIN Pozon for bucking the pressure and convicting US Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith and sending the young rapist to a Philippine jail.

However, I am disturbed that the three other accused were immediately sent abroad and out of reach of our justice system. The VFA provision that allows US jurisdiction over accused US soldiers until the end of the trial should also apply to those found innocent. What if the prosecution appeals the case in the hope of securing a guilty verdict on the three others? Where can they be found if the judge overturned the decision on them?

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

To the US government: Be consistent. If you want to keep custody of Smith because, for you, the trial is not over yet, then bring back Keith Silkwood, Dominic Duplantis and Chad Carpentier.—**Edwin Capili, San Mateo, Rizal (via e-mail)**

* * *

I would like to react to Bishop Oscar Cruz's statement quoted in the INQUIRER: "Women, most especially, should be taught that womanhood is precious and noble, so it is not right for them to be flaunting it around ... They should not make themselves appear cheap and practically inviting to be violated by men."

Who are we to judge how women should or should not dress or carry themselves? Even prostitutes, when offering their services to the likes of US military servicemen, do not give up their right to be treated as human beings. I believe women have the right to dress as they wish. They also have the right to project themselves to the opposite sex in the manner they believe will be noticed. Doing so does not mean they are inviting violation.—**Joey Soriano, Makati City (via e-mail)**

* * *

How disgusted I was at the "dance" and holler of private prosecutor Evelyn Ursua before the cameras after the trial of the Subic rape case. She shouted that the victory was "for the Filipino people."

May I remind her that her client does not exactly embody the ideals of a Filipina. The Filipina that the country must celebrate is not one who downs glass after glass of alcohol in a bar unescorted and freely engaging in sexual acts with a stranger.

I feel sorry that "Nicole" was allegedly raped. But Ursua is not justified in proclaiming that this is a heroic moment for Filipinos. She could have celebrated her victory with more grace and dignity.—**Marinella Yabut, Quezon City (via e-mail)**

* * *

I would like to comment on the "over-emotionality" of Filipinos who exert too much effort rallying in the streets.

I wanted the American soldier to be acquitted. Really, and I have my reasons. I am also from Zamboanga. And let's say that I know "Nicole." I don't want to say more.

I will always ask these questions: Why was Nicole in the club in Subic? What was she doing there? Who told her to go there? I hope people will open their eyes and know who Nicole really is.

The protest rallies are not a show of love for fellowmen, patriotism or nationalism. They are tolerating the whims of a broken-hearted woman.—**Claire Odavar, Pasig City (via e-mail)**

* * *

Why delight in burning the American flag? Does Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith represent the whole of the United States? I say not. Did Ferdinand Marcos represent the whole of the Philippines? I should think not!—**Scott Spencer, Arizona, USA (via e-mail)**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

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GMA to unveil P2-B hotel, tech center in Cagayan

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—President Macapagal-Arroyo will lead today's unveiling ceremonies for a P2-billion hotel, recreation facility and technology center inside the Cagayan Special Economic Zone and Freeport (CSEZFP) in the coastal town of Santa Ana in Cagayan, a bailiwick of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

Ms Arroyo is scheduled to also lead the groundbreaking rites for the 250-meter segment of a P300-million breakwater project at Port Irene in Barangay Casambalangan, said Sta. Ana Mayor Norberto Victor Rodriguez.

Eastern Hawaii Leisure Co. Lt. will build a 300-room, five star hotel and a village with 100 villas on a 17-hectare property in the freeport. The company is expected to bring in thousands of tourists from China and Hong Kong to the facilities.

The technology center, to be built on a 10-hectare property also in the free port, will house an Internet data center, an interactive gaming hub, several software development and call center facilities.

The technology center, a project of the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority-registered First Cagayan Leisure and Resort Corp. (FCLRC), will serve as the communication link of the facilities to the rest of the world.

Mayor Rodriguez said the 300-room hotel complex and technology center within the Ceza Compound in Barangay Centro and the expansion of the Navy airstrip in Barangay San Vicente are among the development projects being pushed by the Ceza to boost economic growth in Northern Luzon.

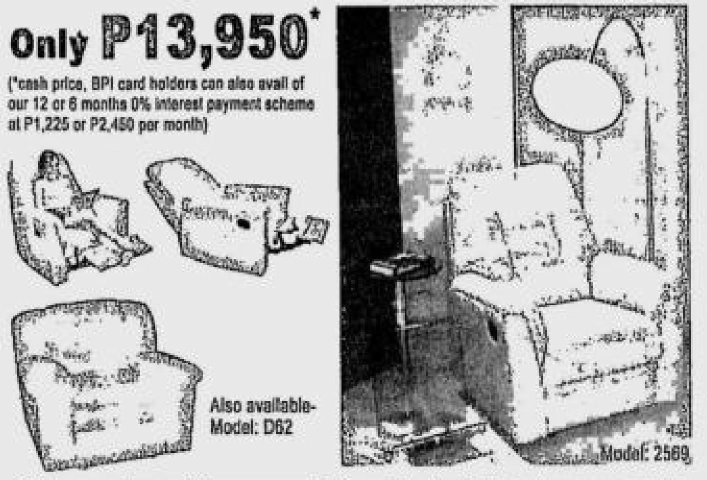
He said while the national government is funding the construction of the breakwater and airstrip, much of the development projects within the economic zone are being funded by the Ceza and the FCLRC.

According to its website, First Cagayan, which obtained a master license to operate Internet gaming at the Ceza Complex, is inviting gaming operators to the facilities by virtue of the provisions of Republic Act 7922, the law that created Ceza.

"Ceza, through First Cagayan, accords gaming operators the chance to become part of a promising business environment, and provides a well-situated base to penetrate the gaming markets of the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world," the website said.

Twenty-nine foreign corporations have already been given licenses to host their services at the economic zone, the website, quoting Justin Hernandez, First Cagayan marketing representative, said.

Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon



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Poll list-up 'overwhelming'

By Jani Arnaiz
Inquirer Visayas

MAASIN CITY—THE CITY ELECTION OFFICER here was overwhelmed by the "unusually" high turnout of residents registering as voter for next year's election.

Lawyer Antonio Gulay, who assumed as election officer only last June, said the quarterly evaluation of registrants have increased tremendously.

"From a low of 100 registrants in the first quarter, it now reached more than 2,000 even if we have yet to evaluate the last quarter," said Gulay.

He said that the public discussions on next year's election might have something to do with the increase.

"I am overwhelmed by the turnout. More than 200 are at our office daily to beat the deadline on Dec. 31," Gulay said.

Gulay said that only 100 have registered in the first quarter, 183 in the second quarter, and 240 in the third quarter. The number jumped during the fourth quarter because even before the quarter ends, there were already 2,300 new registrants, said Gulay.

In the 2004 elections, Maasin City has a voting population of 35,000 but only 22,000 actually voted.

Ask to comment on the "high degree of interest" among soldiers registering in one Leyte town, Gulay said soldiers are only supposed to register at the provincial office of the Comelec because they are not allowed to vote for local candidates.

He said soldiers are like absentee voters.

NDF declares Albay ceasefire

LEGAZPI CITY—THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC Front declared a unilateral ceasefire in Albay Wednesday to give way to "safe and orderly" rescue and relief operations for victims of Supertyphoon Reming.

Greg Banares, NDF-Bicol spokesperson, said the ceasefire is effective until the retrieval of missing bodies and distribution of relief goods and services have been completed.

He said the NDF grieves with Reming's victims and that guerrillas are helping in relief and rehabilitation efforts for the masses.

To avoid clashes, he asked the Arroyo administration and the military not to use the relief and rehabilitation operations for the counter-insurgency plan. (*More stories on Reming's effects on page A19*)

Maj. Ramon Rosario, head of the Civil Relations Group of the Southern Luzon Command, said the military was awaiting orders from higher authorities to decide on the ceasefire.

He said soldiers are busy with relief and retrieval operations in Albay. *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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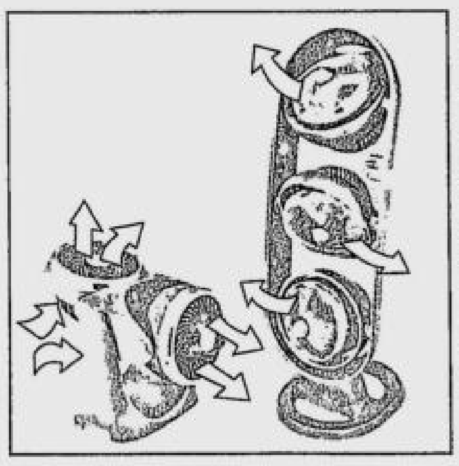

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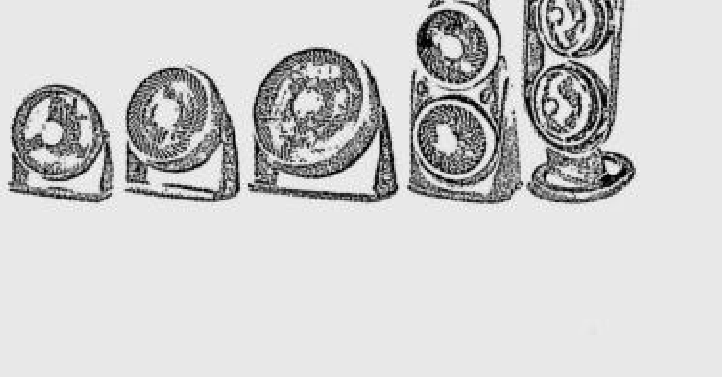

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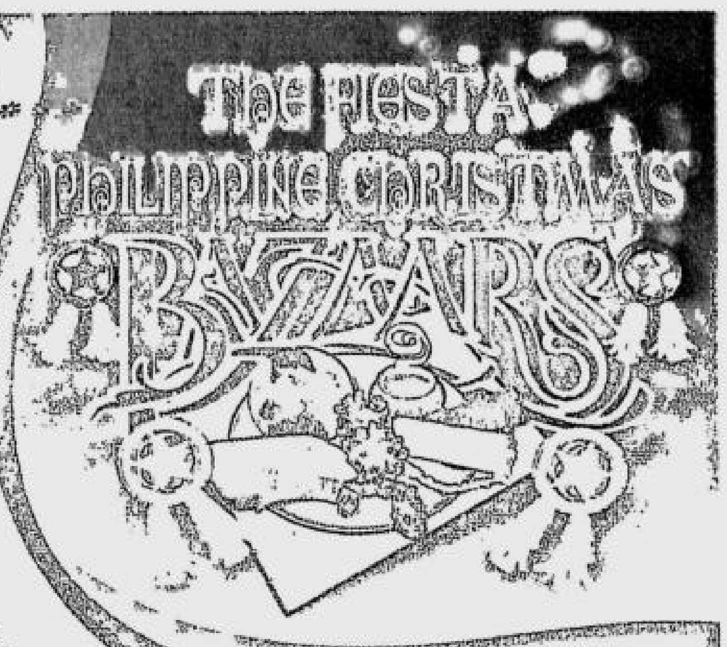
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Karl Edwards	3728403	December 7 - 28, 26 - 30, 2006	The Fort, Taguig, M.M.
A Bazaar @ The Enterprise Center	8241337	December 7 - 8, 2006	3rd Level, Function Room, Ayala Ave. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
Paskong Pinoy, Year 2 Grand Christmas Festival at the Araneta	4109208	December 7 - 10, 2006	Expo Center, Araneta Center Quezon City
World Bazaar Festival	5316330	December 7 - 17	World Trade Center, Pasay City
Mega Christmas Expo 2006	8738202	December 15-17	Mega Trade Hall 2, SM Megamall Pasig City
Streetshop Bazaar at the Fort	8884804	December 15 - 31 (3 PM-12 Midnight)	Fort Plaza, The Fort, Taguig
Noel	8872988	December 21 - 28, 2006	World Trade Center, Pasay City
Tiangge sa Valle Verde	7210872	December 16 - 18, 2006	Valle Verde One Park Clubhouse Pasig City
Christmas Gifts Expo	8738202	December 20 - 24 & 26 - 31, 2006	Halls 2 & 3, SM Megatrade Hall Pasig City

JOSEPH H. DURANO
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Suspended Baguio mayor may not complete term

BAGUIO CITY—THE COURT OF APPEALS has ruled that suspended Mayor Braulio Yaranon, a retired regional trial court judge, may not reclaim his seat at City Hall.

Malacañang penalized Yaranon with two six-month suspension orders for issuing two circulars that discouraged motorists from paying on-street parking fees to Jadewell Parking Systems Corp., a private management firm.

The Palace effectively barred the mayor from completing his remaining term, so he asked the appellate court to reverse the decision.

But in a Nov. 29 decision, Associate Justice Jose Sabio Jr. of the CA's 12th Division rejected the mayor's arguments that he had acted lawfully.

The court said it must respect Malacañang's authority to decide on Yaranon's case, and "finding no prima facie abuse of the power of suspension exercised by public respondents [Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno], we deny [Yaranon's] entitlement to an injunctive relief [which he] sought."

Yaranon said he had accepted the suspension order, and was not affected by the latest court ruling.

But he said the appellate court must still act on another petition seeking a review of his suspension order, including the extent of his penalty. He said the review could exonerate him.

Yaranon said he fought Jadewell's 12-year contract because it allegedly legitimized "extortion." "I am mayor and I can make arrests, but I do not have the power to penalize them. But this contract allows a commercial firm to collect fees and to decide on its own when to tow vehicles," he said.

The city council terminated the Jadewell contract and ordered its operations to shut down last week when it withdrew the ordinance that legitimized the contract.

But the council's decision was followed by a series of skirmishes when a group called the Crusaders Against Jadewell tried to freeze the firm's operations by barricading its headquarters.

On Monday night, a bomb exploded inside a City Hall toilet. On Tuesday night, a molotov bomb attack was foiled at the Jadewell premises.

Jadewell employees claimed that unidentified men hurled a plastic bag filled with gasoline at three company tow trucks but they failed to ignite it.

Latest police reports, however, described only one man entering the parking lot with a lighted torch, and a plastic gallon container filled with gasoline.

Yaranon said he consulted the police about the bombing as soon as he was apprised about the incident.

He said he was furious that the controversy had turned ugly. "I hope no one gets hurt, but this can end when the city finally stops Jadewell's operations. They no longer have a leg to stand on. They must go," he said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Reyes says there won't be letup in cleanup of areas hit by oil spill

ILOILO CITY—ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY Angelo Reyes gave assurances that the cleanup of the Petron oil spill will have no letup until the affected areas in Guimaras and Iloilo have been fully rehabilitated.

Reyes issued the statement during a planning workshop organized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for a comprehensive approach to the cleanup of the oil spill.

A briefing paper provided at the workshop held here said there were signs that Guimaras has "already recovered except in terms of oil and grease content ..."

Reyes said a rehabilitation plan would include the replanting of mangrove trees and monitoring of air and water quality. It would also require the upgrading of laboratory equipment to conduct tests in the future.

Reyes gave the assurance following a statement made by the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Fund that it hoped to make payments to victims of the Petron oil spill before Christmas.

Representatives of IOPC were to meet with government officials and associations of fishermen in Guimaras to discuss the IOPC assessment on the claims for compensation submitted by fishermen and villagers who suffered from the effects of the oil spill.

The IOPC has received 13,000 claims, mostly from fishermen who lost their livelihood after the tanker Solar I sank 13 miles southwest of Nueva Valencia town on Aug. 11. *Nestor Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

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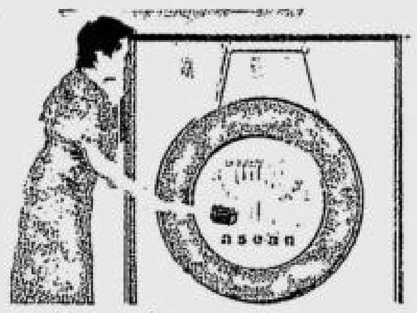

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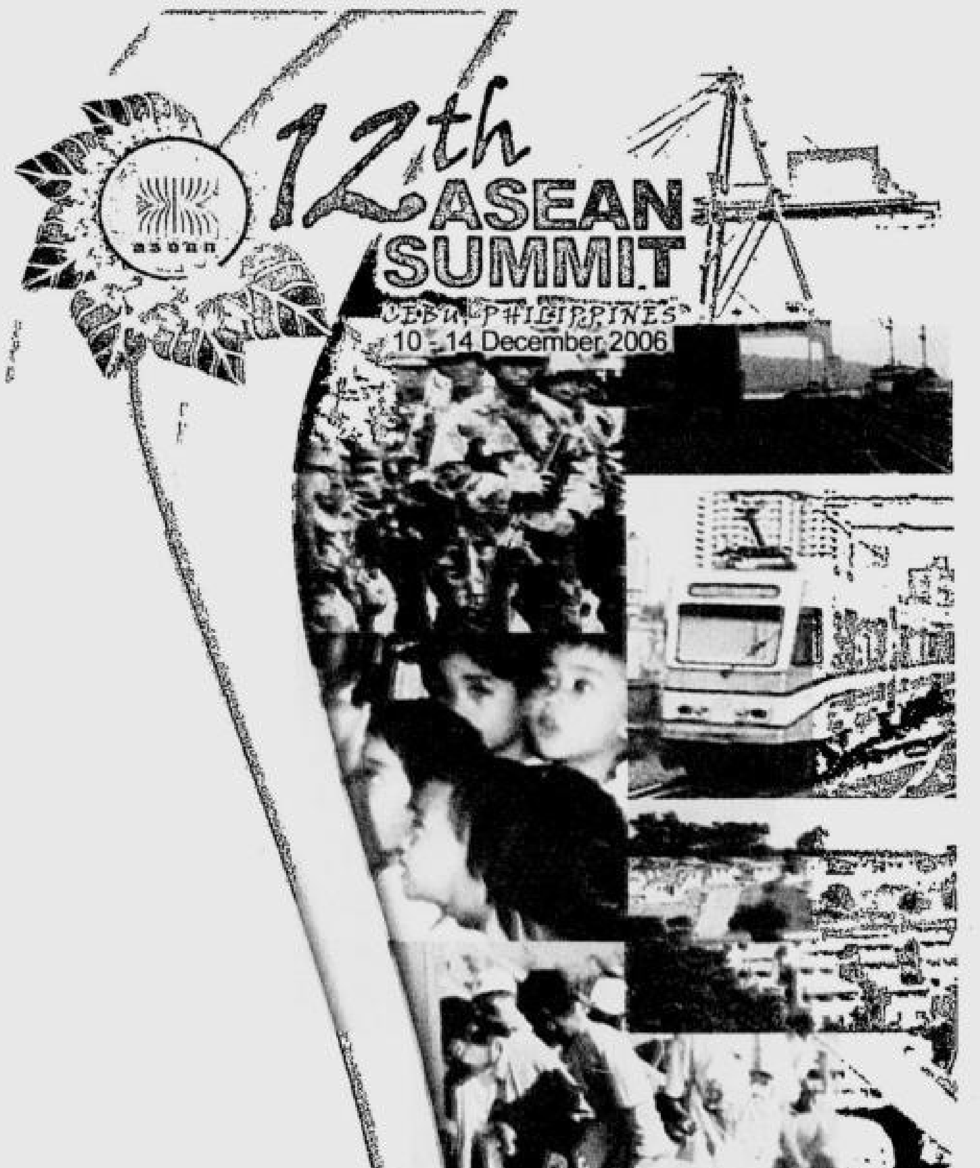
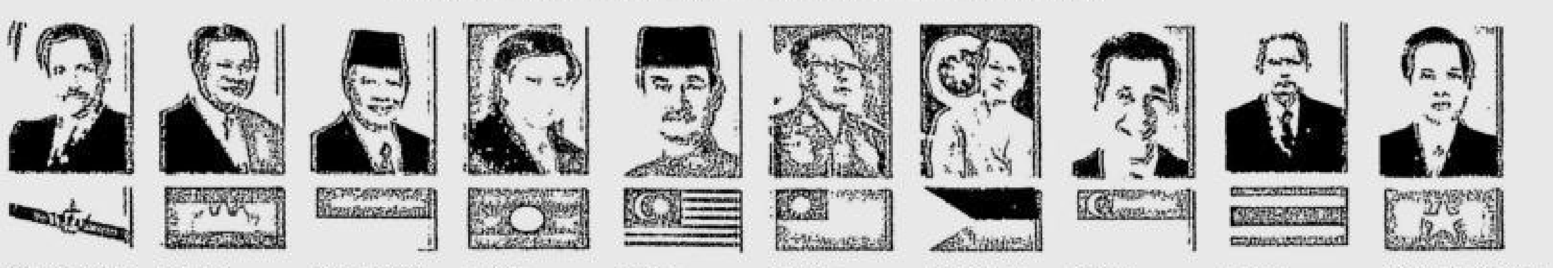


Leaders Attending 12th ASEAN Summit



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Landowners blamed for power outage

NAGA CITY—EFFORTS TO RESTORE power in areas recently hit by Supertyphoons "Milenyo" and "Reming" are being hampered by several landowners who are demanding immediate payment for access by workers of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) to the sites of destroyed towers, an executive here revealed.

Guillermo Redoblado, Transco vice president, said landowners in Albay and Naga City were preventing Transco workers from setting up temporary towers despite the firm's assurance of payment once documentary requirements were complied with.

Redoblado recounted one incident this week in Ligao wherein Gov. Fernando Gonzales had to step in to allow Transco personnel to enter a lot where power restoration work was to be done.

"It was an embarrassing situation. We had to ask for the intervention of the governor. Governor Gonzales was not able to convince the landowner until he asked with a straight face how much money he needed to allow our men to enter the property," he said.

He said the landowner only allowed entry after he was paid P4,000, representing access payment for two months.

Redoblado said the same amount was demanded by another landowner in Naga on Wednesday.

He said Transco had set a "sentimental target" of restoring all power lines in Bicol before Christmas by putting up a so-called Emergency Restoration System, that is, a temporary tower capable of transmitting the same load of electricity to distributors.

Redoblado said that on top of the 42 Transco towers that Milenyo had felled, 116 towers and 887 wood poles were destroyed by Reming.

He said it would cost some P1 billion to rehabilitate the power lines.

He said the towers toppled by the two supertyphoons were old and designed to withstand winds of 165 kilometers per hour and below.

Redoblado said the new towers that the Transco would be putting up were designed to withstand winds of 280 kph and would have a life span of 30-35 years.

He said the power line between Naga and Tayabas town in Quezon was saved so that power from the Luzon grid was readily available for Bicol as soon as power cooperatives gave the go-signal.

Redoblado said power generation in Tiwi and Bacman were still down so available power for Bicol could only come from the Luzon grid that runs from Quezon to Bicol.

He said Transco had to spend at least P91 million just to temporarily restore electric power in Bicol.

Redoblado said it would take at least two more weeks to restore power in Albay and Legazpi.

Power restoration in Sorsogon is expected by Dec. 16; Naga-Tiwi lines on Dec. 16; and Naga-Labo lines on Dec. 28. *Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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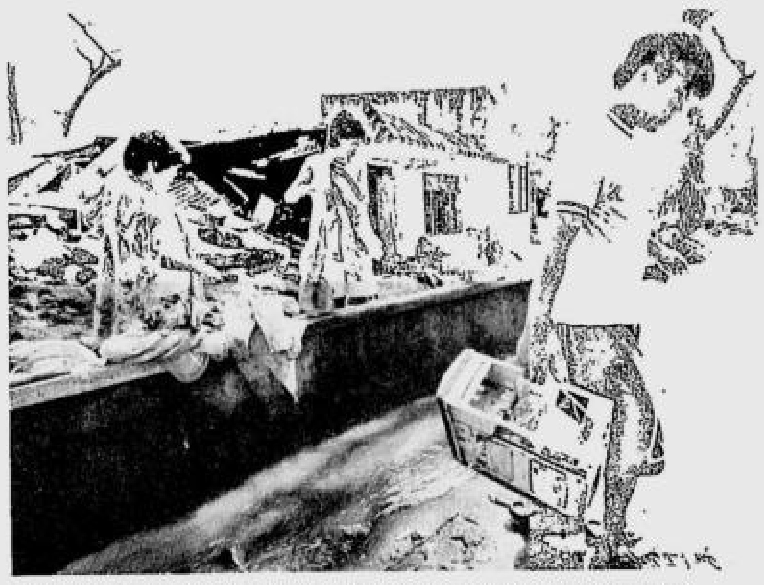
Spanish NGO offers help to Albay



MUDDY water flows on what used to be a street as Benjie Callo salvages a computer while his mother and another relative retrieve other items outside their house half-buried by mudflow in a village in Albay. AFP

NAGA CITY—A SPANish nongovernment organization is offering assistance to Supertyphoon "Reming" victims.

The Accion Contra El Hambre (Aceh), which has headquarters in Madrid, is processing the needs of victims in Daraga, Albay and in Cabusao, Camarines Sur. The two areas were hit hard by Reming.

Committed to fight hunger worldwide, Aceh also conducts relief operations, rehabilitation programs and development initiatives in places of starvation.

Vincent Mervoyer, food security coordinator, said the group primarily responds to food and potable water needs in disaster areas.

Mervoyer said that in certain circumstances Aceh provides temporary shelter and mats.

He said the group was now working with indigenous people in Caraga and had been in Guinsaugon in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte, when a mudslide swallowed the entire village.

Mervoyer said his group had to assess first what the victims need before starting relief operations.

He said that in Cabusao, they had to respond to the people's need for temporary shelter, aside from food and water.

"The people there were camping out because even the evacuation centers (school buildings) were destroyed," Mervoyer said.

He added that in procuring food, they always studied the availability of supply.

"If the procurement of food would result in shortage in the area, we would resort to buying them outside," Mervoyer said.

He said they implement directly the program in close coordination with local authorities and other agencies.

Mervoyer said that after Reming hit the region, he coordinated with the Bicol Regional Disaster Coordinating Council and offered help until he was referred to the provincial government of Camarines Sur. *Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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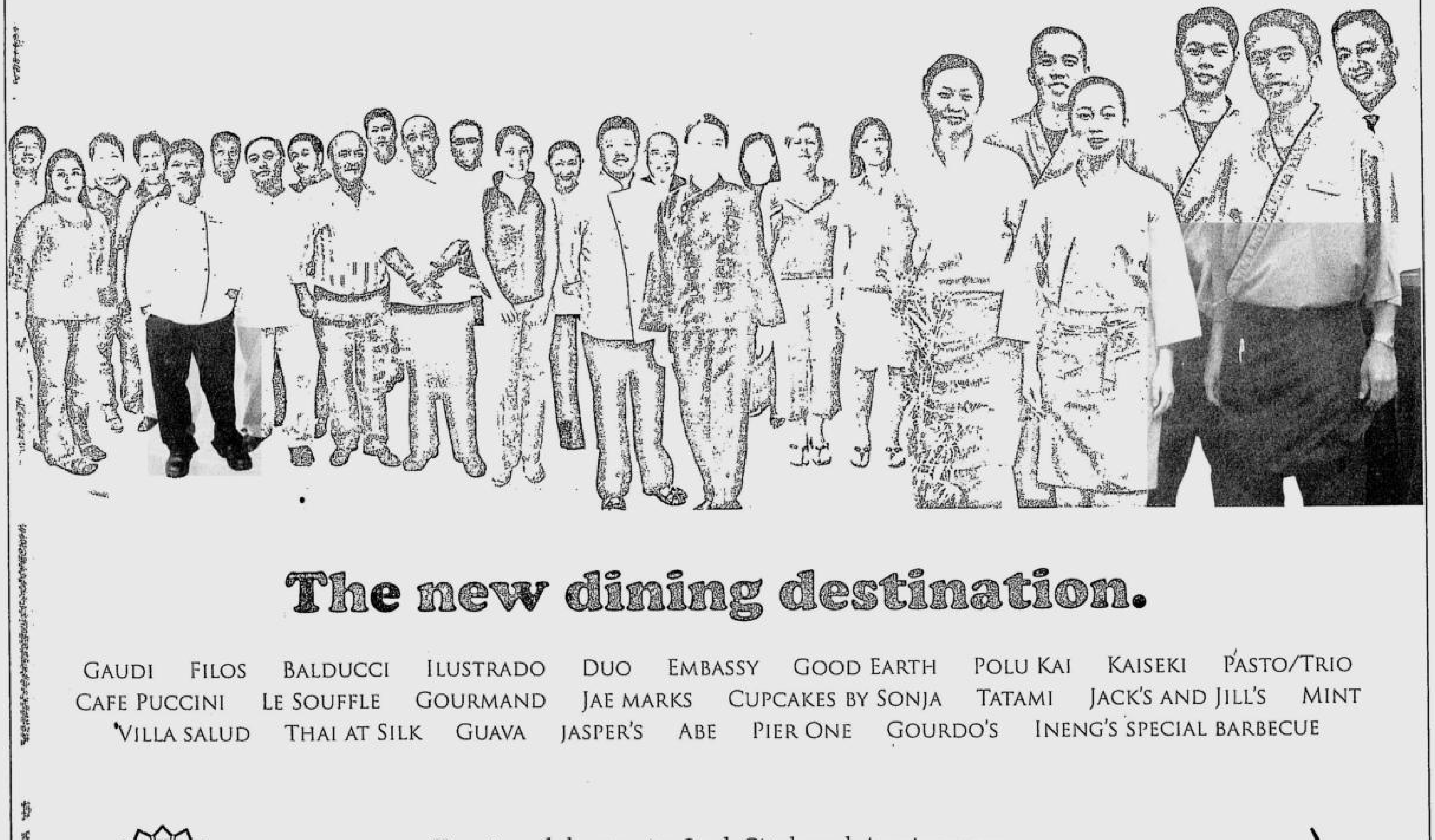

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Marilao folk say never again to toxic waste

MARILAO, BULACAN—AGHAST OVER THE dumping of toxic chemicals into an irrigation canal last week, residents and local government officials have joined hands in protecting their villages from illegal dumping of wastes and hazardous chemicals from Metro Manila.

Mayor Epifanio Guillermo and Vice Mayor Juanito Santiago said they had become more vigilant against efforts of unscrupulous people to dump wastes here.

Because of the cooperation of the community, police filed charges of violation of environment laws against truck driver Lope Reyes; his helper Allan Torres; Rexson Carpio, the contractor hired by CFS Waste Management Corp.; agent Ato Policarpio; and truck owner Evelyn Sto. Tomas, Santiago said.

He said he had discouraged a group of residents from allowing Metro Manila garbage to be dumped here for a fee.

"We have asked them not to allow garbage trucks to pass by their villages. Otherwise, we will impose stiffer penalties on them," Santiago said.

He said a number of residents were profiting from illegal dumping.

Lormelyn Claudio, regional director of the Environmental Management Bureau, said 8,000 people from nine villages here had evacuated because of the noxious smell of chemicals dumped here. Scores were hospitalized.

The dumping had affected a 4.9-kilometer stretch of the biologically dead Marilao River, Claudio said. But she said the spread of chemicals had been contained due to the collective efforts of national government agencies, private firms, provincial and local governments and police.

Claudio said the licenses of CFS Waste Management Corp. in Valenzuela City had been ordered cancelled. The company was fined from P500,000 to less than P3 million.

Lawyer Eugenio Resurreccion, provincial legal officer, on Tuesday filed at the provincial prosecutor's office in Malolos City another case of violation of hazardous and nuclear wastes law against seven CFS officers, including its owner, and a farmer, who reportedly helped in dumping the wastes. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

A WOMAN and her son fall asleep at an evacuation center where they sought refuge from fumes coming from toxic chemicals dumped in their village in Marilao, Bulacan. EDWIN BACASMAS

Town suspends enforcement of waste disposal law in bid to fight dengue

BANSALAN, DAVAO DEL SUR—THE MUNICIPAL council has suspended implementation of the local ecological solid waste management program in a bid to boost the campaign against the proliferation of dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

Dozens of residents have been hospitalized in recent weeks and a 5-year-old girl died last month because of dengue.

Councilor Solomon Fuentez, chair of the council's environment committee, said Resolution No. 223-2006, which suspended the imposition of penalties on people caught burning leaves and other trash at their backyards, was recently passed.

He said health officials had testified that the smoke could help drive away mosquitoes.

"Bansaleños have been requesting us to revise Ordinance No. 357, but it would take time to amend it so we decided to temporarily suspend it. The suspension would help our efforts to eradicate dengue-carrying mosquitoes," Fuentez said.

Councilor Lord Espina, chair of the health committee, said he also proposed the emergency purchase of fogging machines and pesticides to help the local health office in its antidengue drive.

He said fogging was one of the solutions seen to boost the campaign.

"The fogging machines and the chemicals would be distributed to every barangay. Volunteers would also be tapped for the spray campaign," he said.

He said that even rice farmers were asked to volunteer, using their knapsack sprayers.

Teodoro Martin, municipal sanitary inspector, said villagers could do their share by getting rid of cans and used tires.

"Gutters and containers must be checked for stagnant water to prevent these mosquitoes from reproducing," he said.

Espina said the dengue situation was being closely monitored, especially in areas where a high number of cases had been reported in past months. *Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao*

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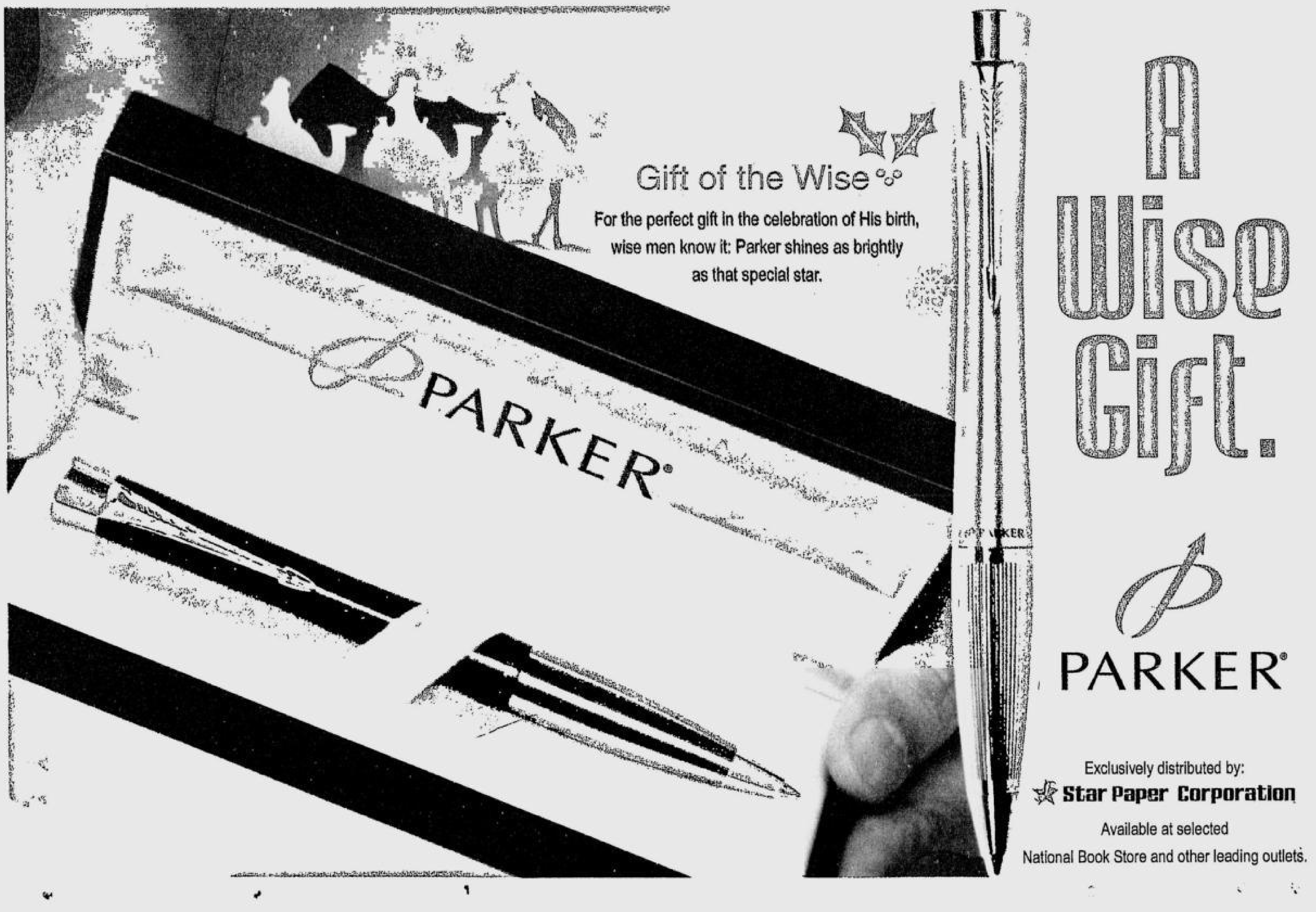

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BAC-L-03 House & Lot
LA 310sqm FA 178.5sqm
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BAC-L-04 House & Lot
LA 250sqm FA 189.34sqm
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2-Storey warehouse type building
Min. Bid Price: P 1,086,000

BAC-L-05 House & Lot
LA 459sqm FA 158sqm
Lot 24, Block 25, Bata Subdivision
2 Storey Residential building
Min. Bid Price: P 900,000

BAC-L-06 House & Lot
LA 512sqm FA 134sqm
Lot 29, Mabini St., Cadiz City
Min. Bid Price: P 880,000

BAC-L-07 House & Lot
LA 360sqm FA 48sqm
Lot 5-A, St. Francis St., Greensville Subd., Phase II
Min. Bid Price: P 570,000

BAC-L-08 House & Lot
LA 300sqm FA 61.56sqm
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Cadiz City (with encroachment on the adj lot)
Min. Bid Price: P 385,000

BAC-L-09 House & Lot
LA 272sqm FA 152.75sqm
Lot 7, Block 7, Andrea Village, Cadiz City
Min. Bid Price: P 365,163

BAC-L-10 Warehouse & Building
LA 460sqm FA 596.17sqm
Lot 366-B, Lacson St.
Min. Bid Price: P 6,500,000

BAC-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 1,385sqm
Lot 1444-B-4, Cordova Ave. cor. Lot 1444-B-5
Brgy. Banago
Min. Bid Price: P 2,979,000

BAC-V-02 Vacant Lot
LA 1,763sqm
Lot 1, Magsaysay Ave., Singcang, Airport
Min. Bid Price: P 2,097,300

BAC-V-04 Vacant Lot
LA 1,385sqm
Lot 1444-B-3, Cordova Ave., Brgy. Banago
Min. Bid Price: P 2,607,150

BAC-V-05 Vacant Lot
LA 6,800sqm
Lot 190-D-11, National Road, Poblacion, Municipality of Pontevedra, Negros Occidental
Min. Bid Price: P 2,295,000

BAC-V-06 Vacant Lot
LA 2,736sqm
Lot 16, Villa Servando Subdivision, JR Torres, Airport
Min. Bid Price: P 2,216,160

BAC-V-07 Vacant Lot
LA 933sqm
Lot 9, Block 8, Sta. Clara Ave., Sta Clara Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 2,164,560

BAC-V-08 Vacant Lot
LA 1,059sqm
Lot 13, Block 11, Road Lot 11, Liroville Subd., Taculing
Min. Bid Price: P 1,557,000

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BAC-V-10 Vacant Lot
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Min. Bid Price: P 1,000,000

BAC-V-11 Vacant Lot
LA 500sqm
Lot 8, Block 1, Henares Ext. (formerly Libertad Ext.)
Min. Bid Price: P 952,000

BAC-V-12 Vacant
LA 500sqm
Lot 28, Block 1, Doña Socorro T. Locsin St
Min. Bid Price: P 850,000

BAC-V-13 Vacant Lot
LA 540sqm
Lot 30, Block 6, Road Lot 5, Gardenville Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 648,000

BAC-V-14 Vacant Lot
LA 540sqm
Lot 31, Block 6, Road Lot 6, Gardenville Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 648,000

BAC-V-15 Vacant Lot
LA 540sqm
Lot 28, Block 6, Road Lot 5, Gardenville Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 648,000

BAC-V-16 Vacant Lot
LA 1,079sqm
Lot 26, Block 4, Villa Valderrama Subdivision
Mandalagan (no RROW)
Min. Bid Price: P 517,920

BAC-V-17 Vacant Lot
LA 994sqm
Lot 20, Block 4, Villa Valderrama Subdivision
Mandalagan (no RROW)
Min. Bid Price: P 500,000

BAC-V-18 Vacant Lot
LA 994sqm
Lot 22, Block 4, Villa Valderrama Subdivision
Mandalagan (no RROW)
Min. Bid Price: P 500,000

BAC-V-19 Vacant Lot
LA 1,002sqm
Lot 24, Block 4, Villa Valderrama Subdivision
Mandalagan (no RROW)
Min. Bid Price: P 480,750

BAC-V-21 Vacant Lot
LA 1,303sqm
Lot 482-D-4, Greenplains Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 364,840

BAC-V-22 Vacant Lot
LA 300sqm
Lot 3, Block 10, Frankfurt St., Sunshine Valley Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 270,000

BAC-V-23 Vacant Lot
LA 410sqm
Lot 1, Block 3, Puentebella Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 250,000

BAC-V-24 Vacant Lot
LA 240sqm
Lot 52, Block 1, Medel Roadside Subdivision, Tangub
Min. Bid Price: P 90,000

BAC-V-25 Vacant Lot
LA 112sqm
Lot 1-C, Villa Valderrama Subdivision Mandalagan
Min. Bid Price: P 50,000

CEBU CITY

CEB-L-01 Condominium
FA 167.74sqm
2/FDoor 210, EGI by The Sea Condominium, Maribago
Lapu-Lapu City, Mactan
Min. Bid Price: P 5,861,940

CEB-L-02 Condominium
FA 162.8sqm
2/FDoor 220, EGI by The Sea Condominium, Maribago
Lapu-Lapu City, Mactan
Min. Bid Price: P 5,584,950

CEB-L-03 Condominium
FA 179.09sqm
2/F Door 240, EGI by The Sea Condominium, Maribago
Lapu-Lapu City, Mactan
Min. Bid Price: P 4,908,803

CEB-L-04 Condominium
FA 172.7sqm
2/F Door 230, EGI by The Sea Condominium, Maribago
Lapu-Lapu City, Mactan
Min. Bid Price: P 4,593,525

LEYTE

LEY-L-01 House & Lot
LA 441sqm FA 214sqm
Lot 2, Rosa St., Banezville, Brgy Sagkahan
Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 800,000

LEY-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 615sqm
Lot 260, Esperas Avenue, Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 2,000,000

LEY-V-03 Vacant Lot
LA 2,579sqm
Lot 3777-A Baybay Rd, Caslroman, San Jose
Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 1,834,250

LEY-V-04 Vacant Lot
LA 3,009sqm
Lot No. 4035-C-4, Brgy Tigbao, Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 846,281

LEY-V-21 Vacant Lot
LA 639sqm
Lot 5-H, Banezville Subdivision, Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 623,025

NEGROS ORIENTAL

NOR-L-01 House & Lot
LA 224sqm FA 304sqm
Tiego Subd. Brgy 1, Bais City, Negros Oriental
Min. Bid Price: P 1,450,000

NO-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 16,278sqm
Villa San Jose Subd., Barrio Mabigo, Canlaon City
Min. Bid Price: P 3,775,650

NO-V-02 Vacant Lot
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BUT-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 854sqm
Montilla Blvd. Extension, Bo. Bading, Butuan City
Min. Bid Price: P 1,708,000

CDO-L-01 House & Lot
LA 180sqm FA 203.28sqm
#129 Gaabucayan St., Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 1,700,000

CDO-L-04 Townhouse
LA 77sqm FA 157sqm
Unit #2 Kryzl Condominium, 29th-11th Sts., Nazareth
Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 1,300,000

CDO-L-05 Warehouse & Building
LA 227sqm FA 666.1sqm
Mabini Street, Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 9,500,000

CDO-L-08 Warehouse & Building
LA 145sqm FA 506sqm
Pabayo St. corner Yacapin St., Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 6,000,000

CDO-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 450sqm
Leo cor Mercury Sts., Megaheights Subdivision, Gusa
Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 360,000

CDO-V-02 Vacant Lot
LA 310sqm
Manuel Vega St., Consolacion, Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 400,000

CDO-V-03 Vacant Lot
LA 413sqm
Macajalar Road, Camaman-an, Cagayan de Oro City
Min. Bid Price: P 867,300

DIPOLOG & GINGOOG CITY

DIP-L-01 House & Lot
LA 540sqm FA 173sqm
Villa Mana Subdivision, Brgy. Sicayab, Dipolog City
Min. Bid Price: P 918,400

DIP-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 4,311sqm
National Highway, Brgy. Sicayab, Dipolog City
Min. Bid Price: P 2,500,000

DIP-V-02 Vacant Lot
LA 1,766sqm
Brgy. Galas, Dipolog City
Min. Bid Price: P 540,000

GI-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 1,812sqm
Gingoog-Claveria Road, Bo. Kahulogan, Gingoog City
Min. Bid Price: P 577,500

ILIGAN CITY

ILI-L-01 House & Lot
LA 523sqm FA 118sqm
Obach Subdivision, Brgy. Tominobo, Camague
Min. Bid Price: P 1,200,000

ILI-L-02 House & Lot
LA 125sqm FA 66sqm
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ILI-L-03 House & Lot
LA 200sqm FA 130.8sqm
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ILI-L-04 House & Lot
LA 3,057sqm FA 140sqm
G. Lluch St., Palao
Min. Bid Price: P 4,898,640

ILI-V-05 Vacant Lot
LA 792sqm
National Highway, Brgy. Tibanga
Min. Bid Price: P 2,700,000

ILI-V-06 Vacant Lot
LA 2,1710sqm
National Highway, Brgy. Sta. Filomena
Min. Bid Price: P 4,000,000

OZAMIS CITY

OZ-L-01 House & Lot
LA 120sqm FA 236sqm
Sto. Niño Village, Bagon
Min. Bid Price: P 1,279,500

OZ-L-02 Warehouse & Building
LA 4,998sqm FA 1,600sqm
Old Spanish Road cor. Circumferential Road
Las Aguadas
Min. Bid Price: P 9,500,000

OZ-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 8,256sqm
Airport Road, Gango
Min. Bid Price: P 4,606,560

OZ-V-02 Vacant Lot
LA 270sqm
L13, B18, Bernad Subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 110,160

OZ-V-03 Vacant Lot
LA 6,783sqm
Barangay Road, Brgy. Gango
Min. Bid Price: P 2,328,975

OZ-V-04 Vacant Lot
LA 11,994sqm
Barangay Road, Brgy. Gango
Min. Bid Price: P 4,706,850

OZ-V-05 Vacant Lot
LA 20,041sqm
Barangay Road, Brgy. Labo
Min. Bid Price: P 1,950,000

PAGADIAN CITY

PAG-L-01 House & Lot
LA 959sqm FA 1,425sqm
Bonifacio St., Santiago District
Min. Bid Price: P 4,000,000

PAG-L-02 Warehouse & Building
LA 2,010sqm FA 700sqm
Rizal Ave., Brgy. Balangasan
Min. Bid Price: P 5,200,000

PAG-L-03 Warehouse & Building
LA 793sqm FA 686sqm
Bonifacio St., Santiago District
Min. Bid Price: P 9,000,000

SOUTH COTABATO

SC-L-01 House & Lot
LA 525sqm FA 170sqm
Fabian Subdivision, Sto. Nino, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 2,450,000

SC-L-02 House & Lot
LA 598sqm FA 168sqm
Dole Cannery Housing, Polomolok, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 980,000

SC-L-03 House & Lot
LA 407sqm FA 93sqm
Duay Subdivision, Koronadal City
Min. Bid Price: P 550,000

SC-L-04 House & Lot
LA 422sqm
Antipolo Subdivision, Koronadal City
Min. Bid Price: P 400,000

SC-L-05 Warehouse & Building
LA 18,491sqm
National Highway, Banga, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 5,697,000

SC-L-06 Warehouse & Building
LA 604sqm FA 260sqm
Rosal St., Surallah, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 600,000

SC-L-07 Warehouse & Building
LA 599sqm
J. Rizal St., Surallah, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 617,000

SC-L-08 Warehouse & Building
LA 333sqm FA 153sqm
Macagba St., Bo. Uno, Koronadal City
Min. Bid Price: P 826,000

SC-L-09 Warehouse & Building
LA 800sqm FA 400sqm
National Highway, General Santos City (former Dscorama)
Min. Bid Price: P 1,600,000

SC-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 600sqm
National Highway, Sto. Nino., South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 216,750

SC-V-02 Vacant Lot
LA 600sqm
National Highway, Sto. Nino., South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 216,750

SC-V-03 Vacant Lot
LA 600sqm
National Highway, Sto. Nino, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 216,750

SC-V-04 Vacant Lot
LA 760sqm
National Highway, Sto. Nino, South Cotabato
Min. Bid Price: P 274,500

SC-V-05 Vacant Lot
LA 2,526sqm
Bansil Subdivision, Bgy. Makar, General Santos City
Min. Bid Price: P 511,500

SC-V-06 Vacant Lot
LA 10,000sqm
Airport Road, Tambler, General Santos City
Min. Bid Price: P 5,100,000

ILOILO CITY

ILO-L-01 House & Lot
LA 3,474sqm
Arnaldo Blvd., Brgy. Baybay, Roxas City (approximately 200-250m across terminal airport and 200-250m SE from CPC College)
Min. Bid Price: P 6,770,639

ILO-L-02 House & Lot
LA 274sqm FA 180sqm
Bgy. Dayao, Roxas City (40meters from highway going to Libas Fishing Port)
Min. Bid Price: P 2,000,000

ILO-L-03 House & Lot
LA 1,181sqm FA 746sqm
12 Washington Street, Roxas City
Min. Bid Price: P 4,599,281

ILO-L-04 Warehouse & Building
LA 9,411sqm FA 584 & 287sqm
Bagumbayan, Alimodian, Iloilo City (80meters from the Poblacion) Aplasca Rice Mill
Min. Bid Price: P 5,000,000

ILO-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 3,044sqm
Bagumbayan, Alimodian, Iloilo City (100meters from Aplasca Ricemill)
Min. Bid Price: P 913,200

ILO-V-04 Vacant Lot
LA 2,575sqm
Lot 1932-A-2, New Buswang, Kalibo, Aklan
Min. Bid Price: P 927,000

METRO MANILA

MANDALUYONG CITY, MAKATI CITY & PASIG CITY

MAD-L-01 Townhouse
LA 88.6sqm FA 162sqm
Unit 8 BSA Townhomes, JB Vargas St.
Mandaluyong City
Min. Bid Price: P 3,880,000

MAK-L-02 Condominium
FA 72.081sqm
Unit 902 Praise Condominium, M Santillan St.
Makati City
Min. Bid Price: P 1,893,000

MAK-L-06 Condominium
FA 76.671sqm
Unit 903 Praise Condominium, M Santillan St.
Makati City
Min. Bid Price: P 2,013,000

MAK-L-07 Condominium
FA 190.04sqm
Unit 901-L & 901-U Praise Condominium, M Santillan St.
Makati City
Min. Bid Price: P 5,147,000

MAK-L-22 Condominium
FA 242.82sqm
Units 1109 & 1110 Makati Cinema Square, Pasong Tamo
Makati City
Min. Bid Price: P 6,604,704

PS-L-02 Condominium
FA 198.75sqm
Unit SW R-144 Goldloop Towers, Amber Avenue, Ortigas Center
Pasig City
Min. Bid Price: P 5,844,000

RIZAL

RIZ-L-15 Others
FA 445sqm
Lot 1 Block 7, Emerald cor. Zircon St., Pines City Royale Subdivision, Antipolo
Min. Bid Price: P 1,976,000

RIZ-L-17 House & Lot
LA 450sqm FA 420sqm
Lot 11 Block 38, Ligaya St., San Carlos Heights
Bo Tayuman, Binangonan, Rizal
Min. Bid Price: P 2,991,000

RIZ-L-2 House & Lot
LA 218sqm FA 296sqm
Lot 2-H-2-B Plater Subdivision, Ampid
San Mateo, Rizal
Min. Bid Price: P 2,517,000

RIZ-L-25 Townhouse
LA 45sqm FA 102sqm
Unit 15 Southfort Villa Townhouse, ROTC Hunters Road
Cainta, Rizal
Min. Bid Price: P 1,468,800

SAN JUAN

SJ-L-01 Townhouse
LA 45sqm FA 123.58sqm
Unit 11 Crystal Townhomes, 463 Don Ejercito St.
San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 2,183,000

SJ-L-02 Townhouse
LA 45sqm FA 123.58sqm
Unit 12 Crystal Townhomes, 463 Don Ejercito St.
San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 2,336,000

SJ-L-15 Condominium
FA 214sqm
Unit 403 Westwood Condominium, Eisenhower St.
Greenhills, San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 5,693,000

SJ-L-16 Townhouse
LA 34.5sqm FA 105.52sqm
Unit 6 Crystal Townhomes, 463 Don Ejercito St.
San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 1,884,000

SJ-L-18 Condominium
FA 147.4sqm
Units 18-C & 19-C Goldland Tower Condominium
Eisenhower St., Greenhills, San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 4,200,000

BULACAN

BUL-L-05 House & Lot
LA 5,765sqm FA 100sqm
#293 KM. 38 Pulong Buhangin, Sta. Maria
Min. Bid Price: P 4,477,500

BUL-L-06 House & Lot
LA 850sqm FA 305sqm
1029 Libis St., Saluysoy, Meycauayan
Min. Bid Price: P 3,619,500

BUL-L-12 Warehouse & Building
LA 450sqm FA 669sqm
Lot 61-E, 61-F & 61-G Main Ave., Metrogate 2 Subd.,
Bahay Pare, Meycauayan
Min. Bid Price: P 2,900,000

BUL-V-01 Vacant Lot
LA 659sqm
Lots 28 & 29 Blk 3 Mahogany St., Green Plains, Calumpit
Min. Bid Price: P 1,334,250

BUL-V-09 Vacant Lot
LA 37,000sqm
Lot 869-B Brgy. Gufod, Magunao, San Rafael
Min. Bid Price: P 5,600,000

CALOOCAN CITY

CA-L-02 House & Lot
LA 600sqm FA 620sqm
Lots 16 & 17, Sta. Maria St. Guadanoville Subdivision
Tala
Min. Bid Price: P 4,347,000

CA-L-05 House & Lot
LA 200sqm FA 289sqm
#134 Salvador St., Baesa
Min. Bid Price: P 1,800,000

MALABON CITY & VALENZUELA CITY

MAL-L-01 House & Lot
LA 369sqm FA 296sqm
#63 Col Espiritu St., Tinajeros, Malabon City
Min. Bid Price: P 2,335,000

MAL-L-02 Condominium
FA 1,149 sqm
134 MH Del Pilar Road, Santulan, Malabon City
Min. Bid Price: P 8,588,000

VAL-L-06 Condominium
FA 657sqm
Lots 18 & 19, Block 4, Pearl St., Hiyas Homes
Subdivision Parada, Valenzuela City
Min. Bid Price: P 2,900,000

PARAÑAQUE CITY

PAR-L-10 Condominium
FA 172.69sqm
Unit 702 Pacific Coast Plaza, 1st Villamar St., Tambo
Residential condo 2BR, 2TB, 1 parking slot
Min. Bid Price: P 3,723,000

PAR-L-11 Condominium
FA 164.62sqm
Unit 703 Pacific Coast Plaza, 1st Villamar St., Tambo
Residential condo, 2BR, 2TB, 1 parking slot
Min. Bid Price: P 3,905,000

PAR-L-16 Condominium
FA 95.15sqm
Unit 903, 9/F Chateau de Baie Condo, Roxas Blvd.
Brgy. Baclaran
Residential condo, 2BR, 2TB
Min. Bid Price: P 2,300,000

PAR-L-5 House & Lot
LA 493sqm FA 271.44sqm
No. 12 Roma cor. Naples Sts., Merville Park Subdivision
2-stry house 4BR, 2TB
Min. Bid Price: P 4,320,000

PAR-L-6 House & Lot
LA 400sqm FA 367sqm
No. 9 Teheran St., Merville Park Subdivision
2-stry house, 6BR, 4TB
Min. Bid Price: P 4,069,000

PAR-L-9 Townhouse & Apartments
LA 60sqm FA 128sqm
Daang Batang cor. Las Casas de Manila
2-stry townhouse, 2BR, 2TB
Min. Bid Price: P 1,843,200

QUEZON CITY

QC-L-17 House & Lot
LA 223sqm FA 470sqm
#30 Rivera Compound, Brgy. Kaligayan, Novaliches
Quezon City (near SM Fairview)
Min. Bid Price: P 1,550,000

QC-L-1 House & Lot
LA 600sqm FA 340sqm
23 Scout Martinez St., Diliman, Quezon City
2-stry house, 5BR, 4TB
Min. Bid Price: P 8,500,000

QC-L-13 Condominium
FA 34.63sqm
Unit 109 Regalia Park Tower, P. Tuazon St., Cubao
Quezon City
Studio-type commercial condo. No parking slot.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,158,027

QC-L-15 Condominium
FA 44.43sqm
Unit 111 Regalia Park Tower, P. Tuazon St., Cubao
Quezon City
Studio-type commercial condo w/ 1TB. No parking slot.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,485,739

QC-L-2 House & Lot
LA 240 sqm FA 836 sqm
Lot 4 Block 136 Celosia St., Del Nacia 4, Tandang Sora, Quezon City
3-stry house, 5BR, 3TB
Min. Bid Price: P 4,358,000

QC-L-5 Townhouse & Apartments
LA 60sqm FA 130sqm
42-B Mayor A. Rodriguez Ave., Tandang Sora
Quezon City
2-stry house, 3BR, 2TB
Min. Bid Price: P 1,872,000

QC-L-6 Townhouse & Apartments
FA 168sqm
Unit B-10 Verde Royale Townhomes, Pluto St.
Bahay Toro, Quezon City
2-stry townhouse, 3BR, 2TB
Min. Bid Price: P 3,091,200

QC-L-7 Townhouse & Apartments
FA 230.61sqm
Unit 10 Capitol Golf Townhomes, Capitol Hills, QC
3-stry townhouse (w/ attic), 4BR, 4TB
Min. Bid Price: P 4,300,000

QC-L-8 Townhouse & Apartments
FA 190.52sqm
Unit 26 Capitol Golf Townhomes, Capitol Hills, QC
2-stry townhouse (w/ attic), 4BR, 3TB
Min. Bid Price: P 4,001,000

SM PRIME

PRSJ-L-01 Condominium
FA 300sqm
Unit 23 PA Eisenhower Condominium, Eisenhower St.,
Greenhills, San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 9,800,000

PRSJ-L-02 Condominium
FA 300sqm
Unit 26 PA Eisenhower Condominium, Eisenhower St.,
Greenhills, San Juan
Min. Bid Price: P 9,800,000

PRT-L-01 House & Lot
LA 1,794sqm FA 820sqm
1 Pinas St., Pinesville Subdivision, Taytay, Rizal
Min. Bid Price: P 7,500,000

PRQC-L-02 Vacant Lot
LA 924sqm
LA Filonila St., New Manila, Quezon City
Min. Bid Price: P 9,500,000

PRQC-L-03 Warehouse & Building
LA 262sqm FA 1,100sqm
Camachile cor Gallor Sts near EDSA Unang Sigaw
Balintawak, Quezon City
Min. Bid Price: P 6,600,000

ANTIPOLO - PARKRIDGE ESTATES

PARK-AV-1 Vacant Lot
LA 446sqm
Block 13 Lot 7
Parkdrive Lot, TCT No R-1717; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 361,260

PARK-AV-2 Vacant Lot
LA 493sqm
Block 13 Lot 3
Parkdrive Lot, TCT No R-1724; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 399,330

PARK-AV-3 Vacant Lot
LA 365sqm
Block 13 Lot 4
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1725; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 328,500

PARK-AV-4 Vacant Lot
LA 475sqm
Block 13 Lot 5
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1726; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 384,750

PARK-AV-5 Vacant Lot
LA 404sqm
Block 13 Lot 6
Parkdrive Lot, TCT No R-1727; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 363,600

PARK-AV-6 Vacant Lot
LA 399sqm
Block 13 Lot 8
Parkdrive Lot, TCT No R-1728; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 359,100

PARK-AV-7 Vacant Lot
LA 476sqm
Block 13 Lot 9
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1729; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 385,560

PARK-AV-8 Vacant Lot
LA 407sqm
Block 13 Lot 11
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1731; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 366,300

PARK-AV-9 Vacant Lot
LA 413sqm
Block 13 Lot 12
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1732; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 371,700

PARK-AV-10 Vacant Lot
LA 421sqm
Block 13 Lot 13
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1733; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 341,010

PARK-AV-11 Vacant Lot
LA 414sqm
Block 13 Lot 14
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1734; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 372,600

PARK-AV-12 Vacant Lot
LA 419sqm
Block 13 Lot 15
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1735; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 339,390

PARK-AV-13 Vacant Lot
LA 415sqm
Block 13 Lot 16
Parkdrive Lot,TCT No R-1736; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 373,050

PARK-AV-14 Vacant Lot
LA 412sqm
Block 13 Lot 17
Parkdrive Lot, TCT No R-1737; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 370,800

PARK-AV-15 Vacant Lot
LA 406sqm
Block 13 Lot 18
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1738; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 365,400

PARK-AV-16 Vacant Lot
LA 401sqm
Block 13 Lot 19
Parkdrive Lot, TCT No R-1739; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 360,900

PARK-AV-17 Vacant Lot
LA 425sqm
Block 13 Lot 20
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1740; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 382,500

PARK-AV-18 Vacant Lot
LA 409sqm
Block 13 Lot 21
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1741; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 368,10

PARK-AV-19 Vacant Lot
LA 465sqm
Block 13 Lot 22
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1742; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 418,500

PARK-AV-20 Vacant Lot
LA 403sqm
Block 13 Lot 23
Parkdrive Lot; TCT No R-1743; best used as upper middle residential subdivision
Min. Bid Price: P 362,700

CAVITE - MANGO ORCHARD

MANGO-CV-1 Farm Lot
LA 2,649sqm
Block 1 Lot 8, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot; TCT No 956720; best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 794,700

MANGO-CV-2 Farm Lot
LA 1,358sqm
Block 1 Lot 12, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot; TCT No 956719, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 407,400

MANGO-CV-3 Farm Lot
LA 1,290sqm
Block 4 Lot 15, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot; TCT No 956751. best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 466,560

MANGO-CV-4 Farm Lot
LA 1,423sqm
Block 5 Lot 16, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot; TCT No 956750, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 512,280

MANGO-CV-5 Farm Lot
LA 1,770sqm
Block 6 Lot 2, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot,TCT No 956749, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 531,000

MANGO-CV-6 Farm Lot
LA 2,688sqm
Block 6 Lot 3, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956748, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 806,400

MANGO-CV-7 Farm Lot
LA 2,868sqm
Block 6 Lot 6, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot; TCT No 956747, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 774,360

MANGO-CV-8 Farm Lot
LA 2,733sqm
Block 6 Lot 7, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956746, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 737,910

MANGO-CV-9 Farm Lot
LA 1,856sqm
Block 8 Lot 2, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot, TCT No 956745, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 668,160

MANGO-CV-10 Farm Lot
LA 1,267sqm
Block 9 Lot 15-A, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot : TCT No 956744, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 380,100

MANGO-CV-11 Farm Lot
LA 1,327sqm
Block 10 Lot 2, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956743, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 398,100

MANGO-CV-12 Farm Lot
LA 3,243sqm
Block 20 Lot 2, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956742, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 972,900

MANGO-CV-13 Farm Lot
LA 1,322sqm
Block 20 Lot 19, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956741, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 356,940

MANGO-CV-14 Farm Lot
LA 1,607sqm
Block 26 Lot 19, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot, TCT No 956740, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 578,520

MANGO-CV-15 Farm Lot
LA 1,399sqm
Block 28 Lot 2, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot , TCT No 956739, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 503,640

MANGO-CV-16 Farm Lot
LA 1,032sqm
Block 28 Lot 10, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956738 best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 278,640

MANGO-CV-19 Farm Lot
LA 1,031sqm
Block 28-A Lot 9, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot; TCT No 956735, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 309,300

MANGO-CV-21 Farm Lot
LA 1,106sqm
Block 31 Lot 23, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot; TCT No 956733 best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 298,620

MANGO-CV-22 Farm Lot
LA 1,673sqm
Block 33 Lot 6, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot, TCT No 956732, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 501,900

MANGO-CV-23 Farm Lot
LA 1,622sqm
Block 34 Lot 2, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot TCT No 956731, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 486,600

MANGO-CV-24 Farm Lot
LA 1,690sqm
Block 35 Lot 1, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot TCT No 956730, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 456,300

MANGO-CV-25 Farm Lot
LA 1,896sqm
Block 35 Lot 11, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956729, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 511,920

MANGO-CV-26 Farm Lot
LA 1,822sqm
Block 35 Lot 25, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Corner Lot, TCT No 956728, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 491,940

MANGO-CV-27 Farm Lot
LA 1,359sqm
Block 36 Lot 3, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956727, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 366,930

MANGO-CV-28 Farm Lot
LA 1,125sqm
Block 37 Lot 1, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956726, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 303,750

MANGO-CV-29 Farm Lot
LA 1,719sqm
Block 37 Lot 7, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956725 best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 464,130

MANGO-CV-30 Farm Lot
LA 1,689sqm
Block 37 Lot 14, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite
Inner Lot, TCT No 956724 best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 456,030

MANGO-CV-31 Farm Lot
LA 1,050sqm
Block 37-A Lot 26, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite; Inner Lot, TCT No 956723, best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 283,500

MANGO-CV-32 Farm Lot
LA 1,511sqm
Block 37-A Lot 31, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite; Inner Lot, TCT No 956722 best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 407,970

MANGO-CV-33 Farm Lot
LA 1,103sqm
Block 38 Lot 4, Mango Orchard, Naic, Cavite; Inner Lot, TCT No 956721 best used as residential with agricultural farm development
Min. Bid Price: P 297,810

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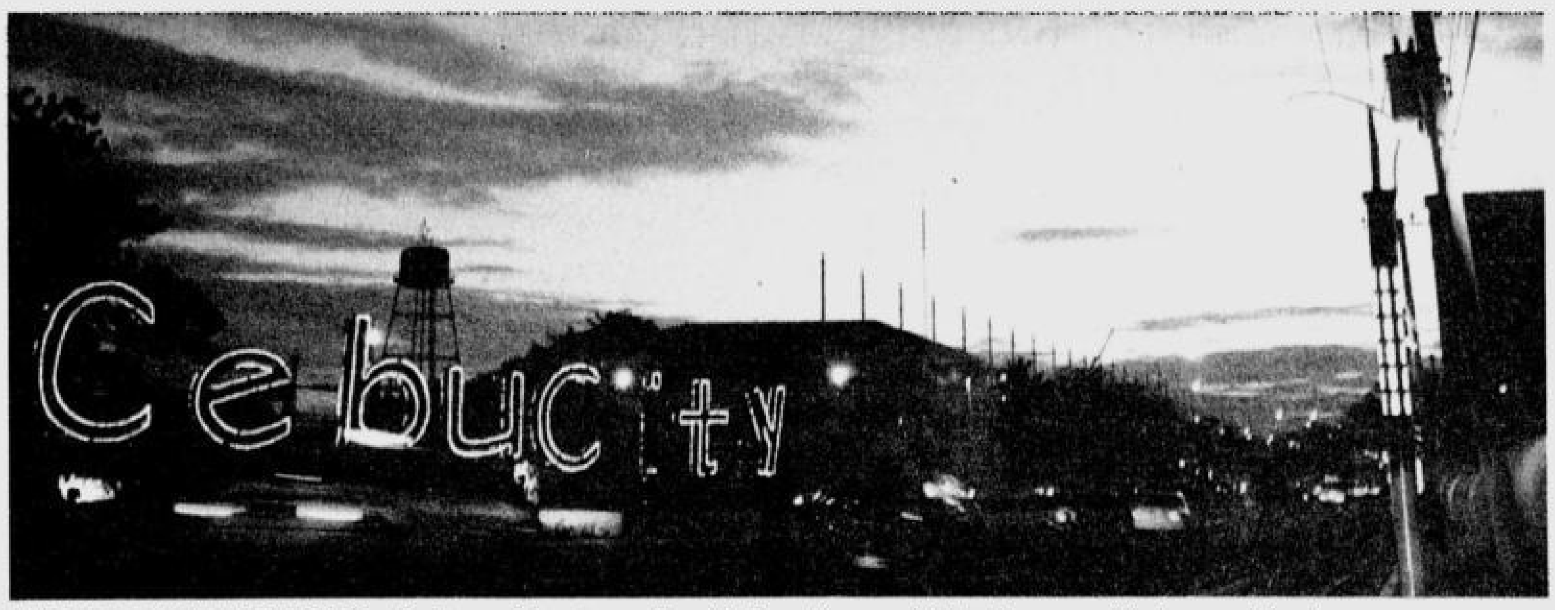
Gov't deports American human rights lawyer



THE ROAD MOST TRAVELLED by the Asean delegates spells out in flora, fauna and lights the name of their queenly host. EDWIN BACASMAS

CEBU CITY—AN AMERICAN HUman rights lawyer has been banned from the Philippines ahead of next week's summit of Southeast Asian leaders in Cebu, officials said.

Brian Campbell of the Washington-based International Labor Rights Fund was detained at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila late Wednesday after flying in from the United States via Hong Kong.

Campbell, who wanted to attend a "jobs and justice" conference organized by activists on the sidelines of the Asean summit here, was put back on the next flight back to Hong Kong, immigration officials said Thursday.

"I can confirm a Brian Campbell was detained," the head of immigration at the airport, Ferdinand Sampol, told Agence France Presse.

"He was put on the next flight back to Hong Kong," he added without elaborating.

Campbell's hosts denounced his deportation.

'Caring and sharing?'

"We are deeply disappointed that the Philippine government, while supposedly promoting the vision of a caring and sharing community in the Asean, would deny a foreign delegate entry to our country just because he is deemed to have views that are different to the agenda in the Asean summit," said Theresa Lauron, secretary general of the Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), which invited Campbell.

In a press conference, Lauron said Campbell was a respected labor lawyer in Washington and they were puzzled why the government had barred him from entering the country.

"This is very disturbing, this is a perfectly legitimate conference that we would like to raise concern and yet this is what happened to our participant who would want to show his solidarity not only with the Filipinos but with the whole of the working class," she said.

She said this action was contrary to "the true spirit of community and democracy."

Campbell, a labor rights lawyer, has since told his hosts he saw a government blacklist of "other names of human rights attorneys who have also been barred entry," the group's statement said.

They included Rachel Lederman and Tina Monshipur Foster, who both took part in a recent fact-finding mission in Manila.

Protest plans

The INQUIRER yesterday reported that Philippine authorities have a blacklist of some 150 foreign activists who will be banned from entering the country while the Asean summit and associated meetings are in progress.

Hundreds of Filipino and foreign activists are descending on Cebu for planned protests around the summit.

Despite the earlier pronouncement of the police to implement a "no-permit, no-rally" policy and a warning of possible arrests of any foreign activist taking part in rallies, militant groups said they would push through with their protests on Dec. 10-14.

Groups affiliated with the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), together with their foreign partners, yesterday opened the APRN "jobs and justice" conference at the auditorium of the St. Theresa's College on D. Jakosalem Street.

The conference was held simultaneously with the Dec. 7-10 Asean Business Forum which opened yesterday at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel, 2 kilometers away from the school.

Around 70 foreign partners have arrived and organizers are expecting at least 150 participants from the United states, Belgium, Germany, and France, according to APRN secretary general Lauron.

Another forum, dubbed the "International Conference on the US Militarism and War on Terror in Asia Pacific" will be held at the STC auditorium on Dec. 9-10.

Lauron revealed that some of the foreigners will also participate in different activities initiated by local groups, such as Bayan and its affiliates.

"We cannot stop out foreign allies who want to be in solidarity with Filipinos. A lot of protest activities have been scheduled and I think it is well within their rights to show their solidarity with the Filipino people," she said.

Not disruptive

Lauron said their activities were not meant to disrupt the summit but to also call attention to the need to address the interest of the working class and not just of the rich and the investors.

"We are here to challenge our Asean leaders to remain true to the founding principle of the Asean which is national liberation, anticolonization and others. We are just trying to show to them what it really meant to develop genuine people's cooperation and solidarity," she said.

She said was thankful that the other foreign participants were able to arrive in Cebu on time. Some have passed through the Naia and others arrived on direct flights to Cebu from Hong Kong yesterday, she said.

Lauron said they were not perturbed by reports that APRN delegates have been placed under the police watch list because their participants are not terrorists.

"There are no evil plans being hatched; these are not terrorists. These are respected people from the academe, professionals, who are well known in their respective countries," she said.

Chief Supt. Silverio Alarcio Jr., police regional director and head of the summit's security task force in Cebu, denied that they would be placing the APRN's foreign participants under surveillance.

'Behave and follow law'

He, however, urged the foreign and local activists to "behave and follow" the law.

Alarcio said the Bureau of Immigration had already stated that foreign nationals could not participate in rallies.

He said the police and the BI have been coordinating closely on how to take custody of foreigners found taking part in protest rallies.

He said the police could not just arrest them because they had not deputized by the bureau.

Other progressive groups, such as Akbayan, Freedom from Debt Coalition, Partido ng Manggagawa and Laban ng Masa had organized the Asean People's Camp and Week of Action from Dec. 9-13.

Lito Vasquez of the FDC said the People's Camp would be held on Dec. 12-13 on the University of the Philippines Cebu grounds. Tents will serve as venues for exhibits and forums.

Arman Perez, Bayan Muna secretary general for Central Visayas, said the groups planned to hold a protest march on Dec. 11 from Fuente Osmeña to the Cebu International Convention Center, a fluvial protest on Dec. 12, sectoral rallies on Dec. 13, and a peace concert on Fuente Osmeña on Dec. 14.

Around 100 fishing boats will join the fluvial protest from Talisay to the first Mactan-Mandaue bridge.

They also plan to burn flags of the United States and Japan, which they blamed for the trade liberalization. *Reports from Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas, and AFP*

Protesters, not terrorists, are the threats to Asean Summit

From page A1

ALL BASES COVERED: Throw in antihijacking exercises, too, to round up the preparedness of the police. JESS YUSON

TERROR ATTACK WARNINGS from three foreign governments keep the security forces deployed in Cebu on their toes and in the water. Philippine Navy SEALs patrol the Mactan Channel near the Shangri-La Hotel, where the 16 Asean and Asian leaders are billeted. AP/BULLIT MARQUEZ

into consideration," he said.

The warnings came as senior officials of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand, comprising Asean, entered their second day of preliminary meetings leading to next week's summit on Dec. 10-13.

No specific threat

Asean leaders have appealed to the international community as early as 2002 not to "indiscriminately" issue such travel advisories on its member countries without "established evidence," saying such pronouncements only helped the terrorists meet their "objectives."

"I don't know where they got that report," said Chief Supt. Silverio Alarcio Jr., police regional director and chair of the committee on security preparations for the Asean summit.

"Perhaps their only basis is that this will be an international event, that's why it's a likely target," Alarcio told the INQUIRER. "But there is no specific and direct terrorist threat to the Asean summit."

Asked if there's any threat at all that had actually posed a concern to his committee, he said it would be "demonstrations, that's more of the existing threat."

US lawyer banned

Immigration officials yesterday announced that Brian Campbell, an American human rights lawyer, had been banned from the Philippines as part of a policy to prevent the entry of who officials had described as "troublemakers." *(See story on Page A22.)*

Campbell of the Washington-based International Labor Rights Fund was detained at Manila airport late Wednesday after flying in from the United States via Hong Kong.

The British and Australian embassies in Manila said civilians in public places, including those frequented by foreigners, remained a target.

"The high threat from terrorism remains throughout the Philippines," the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) said in its website. "We continue to receive reports that terrorist groups are planning further attacks and believe that they have the capacity and the intent to carry out attacks at any time and anywhere in the country."

It warned its citizens in the Philippines that "these attacks could be against civilian targets in public places, including those frequented by foreigners. You should also be aware of the risk of terrorist attacks to all forms of public transport: road, rail, sea and air."

According to the FCO, an estimated 50,000 British tourists visit the Philippines every year and most visits are "trouble-free."

Assessment report

Al-Qaida-linked militants will be a key security concern during the three-day summit, which opens Monday, Philippine officials said, adding that more than 10,000 troops and police were securing the venues.

"We'd like to assure and inform the public that as of this very moment, our security forces have not received any validated threat that would really show there is an attempt directly involving the Asean Summit," said Bacarro.

A confidential government threat assessment report, seen by The Associated Press, cited groups that could pose a threat to the summit, including Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiyah and two Philippine groups, the Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The report said intelligence agencies had not monitored any specific plots against the Asean events by al-Qaida-linked groups, but added such possibilities were not farfetched.

A small group of Christian converts to Islam, the Rajah Solaiman Movement, may be planning to attack two financial districts in Manila, but the report did not say if that was linked to an effort to disrupt the events in Cebu, a tourism and industrial hub 560 kilometers southeast of the capital.

'Cebu remains safe'

Reacting to the British advisory, Alarcio said he did not know the basis for it but claimed security forces were prepared to deal with any plot.

"Cebu remains a safe place," he said, pointing out that even the Interpol General Secretariat based in Lyon, France, has validated their stand that there is no actual threat in Cebu from the terrorists.

"At present, the Interpol General Secretariat has no specific intelligence on direct threats from Jihadist group and networks to the Asean summit," he said.

"As far as the PNP is concerned, there is no specific and direct threat received in connection with the Asean Summit," Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, PNP spokesperson, told reporters in Camp Crame in Quezon City yesterday.

Alarcio said that "with all our preparations, we can see that Cebu right now is the safest place to go."

Security forces

Some 10,000 soldiers and policemen are now in Cebu to secure heads of state, delegates and other participants during the pre-summit activities on Dec. 6-10 and the summit on Dec. 11-14.

Assisting police forces in securing the delegates are 5,000 soldiers from the 46th Infantry Battalion, 7th Marine Battalion based in Samar, the 7th Marine Battalion Landing Team that came from Sulu, and the Light Reaction Company and other elite antiterrorism units of the Armed Forces.

The Philippine National Police also brought to Cebu around 2,000 policemen from its 13 regional commands to secure streets, man traffic and conduct patrols.

Navy SEALs aboard speedboats have been checking coastal areas and a river, where antigovernment protesters were planning a boat parade.

Oplan Masid

An undisclosed number of intelligence agents from the AFP, PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation are also in Cebu to implement Oplan Masid, the intelligence-gathering component of the security plan for Cebu, police sources had earlier revealed.

Alarcio said Task Force Cebu had been executing its security preparation in close coordination with the intelligence community and had not received any report of direct threat from terrorist groups.

The JI has been accused of carrying out the 2002 nightclub bombings that killed 202 people in Bali, Indonesia. The Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for domestic attacks, including a 2004 ferry bombing that killed 116 people.

The MILF is involved in Malaysian-brokered peace talks with the Philippine government.

Alarcio said an earlier report stating that members of the Abu Sayyaf had arrived in Cebu was not validated and never confirmed.

That report was just based on a text message, he added.

Terrorism as topic

Though it became the day's early lead for journalists covering the event, the travel warnings visibly did not elicit tighter security measures at the Cebu International Convention Center housing the press working areas or at the Shangri-La Mactan hotel where the VIPs held their meetings.

But "terrorism" has indeed surfaced in those venues, but only as a recurring topic.

Among the expected documents to come out of the summit is a "convention on counterterrorism" which, according to an official privy to the meetings, will be considered "more legally binding" than past declarations.

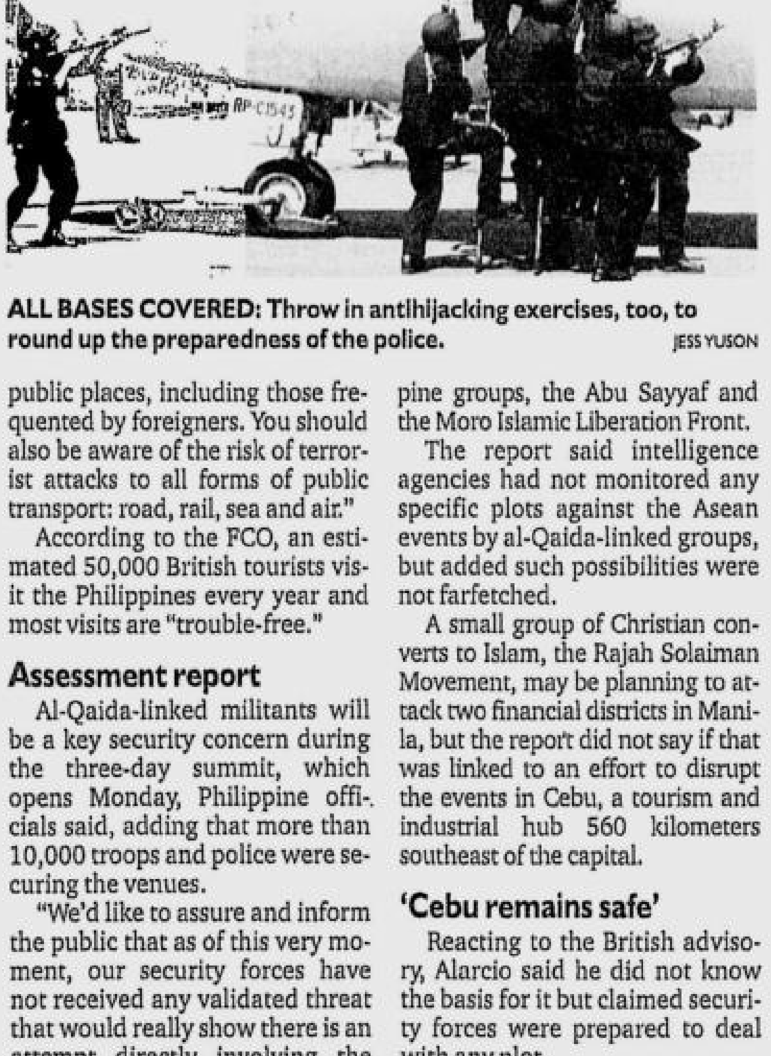
Since it will cover the 10 member-nations, naturally "it will have a larger footprint" than any of the bilateral agreements on counterterrorism that have been forged in the past among these countries, the official explained.

Information sharing

It will also feature "expanded" areas of cooperation to include not only information-sharing, but also matters related to financing and apprehension of suspected terrorists.

The document is coming out in the context of Southeast Asia now being considered "the second most important battleground for terrorism" after the Middle East, the official added.

Formal Asean discussions on terrorism predates the current global alarm triggered by the 9/11 attacks. As early as 1997, a ministerial meeting on law enforcement identified terrorism as one of the transnational crimes against which member states should cooperate. *With reports from Nikko Dizon, Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Alcuin Papa in Manila; and Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas; AP*



PAINTING THE TOWN RED, a shantytown, that is, near the foot of the Marcelo Fernan Bridge in Mactan, Cebu, is covered so it won't be an eyesore in the Asean Summit landscape. EDWIN BACASMAS

MAXIMUM SECURITY is reportedly annoying many Cebuanos whose movements and activities have been curtailed since the Asean buzz began last week. AFP

Cagas tells Con-ass foes: We're lawmakers, and you're not

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE POINT IS THAT WE'RE LAWmakers, and you're not.

This was, in effect, what Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas told members of civil society groups who let loose with loud boos at the House of Representatives on Wednesday night after he called on the majority to use its "numbers" and end the debates that had gone on for hours.

The ensuing commotion led to a suspension of the debates for almost an hour. A member of the minority, Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza, later moved that Cagas' remarks be stricken off the record.

Apparently wearied by the questions that the minority was raising on the floor, Cagas had risen and called for a vote on the resolution for Congress to convene into a constitutional assembly (Con-ass) and propose amendments to the Charter.

"Mr. Speaker, before we vote, there will always be differing opinions... That is accorded in a democracy, [but] let us exercise our numbers. After all, these debates have been done before," he said.

The gallery responded with a resounding boo, prompting the presiding officer, Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar, to bang his gavel to restore order.

Whereupon Cagas told the gallery, which included Corazon "Dinky" Soliman and Florencio "Butch" Abad, both resigned members of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet: "You can shout but you are not members of Congress. You are just guests and [should] behave as guests."

Cagas' remark drew a sharp reaction from Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño.

"Point of order, we are representatives of the people and the people have the right to tell us..." Casino said to wild applause from the gallery.

"Mr. Speaker, they are our constituents and they have the right to speak," he added before Del Mar suspended the session.

Iloilo Rep. Judy Syjuco approached the gallery and tried to defend the majority's stand.

But some spectators booed Syjuco and shouted: "No, you just want a longer term! We want to exercise our rights!"

When the session resumed, Del Mar urged the gallery to maintain proper decorum so as not to disrupt the proceedings.

"We welcome your presence here. We would like you to stay but we remind you that booing and applause and other displays of emotion that would disrupt proceedings are not allowed," he said.

But the flap did not end there, with Plaza rising and asking that Cagas' remarks be stricken off the record.

"Mr. Speaker, our distinguished colleague, Congressman Cagas, lectured members of the House, lectured the minority, on proper decorum and good manners and right conduct. Mr. Speaker, look who's talking," Plaza said.

Pointing out that Cagas was known for rising during regular session days to talk about the pork barrel, Plaza added: "I don't think it is proper that he would stand up again to talk about the Saro (special allotment and release Order), or has he already gotten his Saro, which is why he is misbehaving?

"We should remember, Mr. Speaker, sovereignty resides in the people. And I move for the striking out [of Cagas' remarks]."

Del Mar, however, said the House would consider that issue "at the proper time."

Opposition lawmakers assailed the House majority for ignoring the rules the latter had created just to ram though the resolution for a constituent assembly (Con-ass).

Minority Leader Francis Escudero, San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora and other minority members alternately spoke out against the majority position that only a simple majority vote—and not a vote of three-fourths of members of Congress—was needed to approve the resolution.

It's all-out war vs Con-ass; massive rally Dec. 15

From page A1

lant, saying the temptation to manipulate and to hold on to power endangers the common good and the safety of the greatest number.

Rosales' blessing

Quitorio said the prayer rally had the blessing of Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, archbishop of the powerful Metropolitan See of Manila.

The low-key cardinal is known to shy away from politics, preferring instead to focus quietly on poverty alleviation and values formation programs in his archdiocese.

Rosales is expected to join other Metro Manila bishops at Rizal Park for the big anti-Charter change prayer rally, according to Quitorio. The other prelates are Bishops Deogracias Iñiguez of Caloocan, Antonio Tobias of Novaliches, Honesto Ongtioco of Cubao, Jesse Mercado of Parañaque and Francisco San Diego of Pasig.

Quitorio said the rally was the bishops' reaction to developments in the House, particularly the adoption of the majority bloc's resolution convening Congress into a constituent assembly.

No more morals

"We are alarmed with what's happening at the lower house," he told the INQUIRER. "There are no more morals, no more rules. The rule is what suits administration congressmen."

Quitorio said the CBCP was particularly dismayed that supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo seemed more preoccupied with their political interest in Manila while thousands of Filipinos were dying and starving in Bicol in the aftermath of Typhoon "Reming."

He said it was unwise for the Arroyo administration and its allies in the House to push for Con-ass with apparent haste and questionable motives. "They're just instigating the people," he said.

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. confirmed last night that he met with El Shaddai leader Bro. Mariano "Mike" Velarde early in the day in a bid to forge an alliance against the House-only Con-ass.

"I've been going around conferring with groups opposed to Con-ass to apprise them of the Senate position, as well as to get their position," he said.

The Senate invited Velarde, who earlier told the INQUIRER that he would block the legally flawed House Con-ass, to a hearing set for Monday on the proposals to amend the Constitution.

The Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, which pushed for the dismissed people's initiative to amend the Charter, sought a breakfast meeting with Villar today in a bid to broker a dialogue between the Senate and House on Charter change.

Nat'l Council of Churches

In a statement, the NCCP said it was joining "the CBCP and other sectors of society in their efforts to thwart this deceptive machination to tinker with the Constitution."

The NCCP said it was not against Charter change per se. "Amendments are necessary in order for the Charter to ensure the welfare of the citizens. No doubt, the present Constitution stands in need of substantial improvement, but definitely not at this time and certainly not for the wrong reasons," it said.

In Tanay, Rizal, where he is detained, Estrada urged Filipinos to go out into the streets and protest Con-ass.

"With every breath I have, I will fight this unconscionable rape of our Constitution and the murder of our democracy and freedoms," Estrada said in a statement.

He deplored the move of the House majority to convene a Con-ass without the cooperation of the Senate.

"As in 2001 when (President Macapagal-Arroyo) mounted a coup d'etat in January to depose [me], the Constitution was treated as a dirty rag. There was no respect shown for the Constitution and democracy, with the sacred document and covenant with the Filipino people trampled by the coup plotters," he said.

Estrada, despite five years in detention, remains the acknowledged leader of the United Opposition.

In May 2001, Estrada's arrest and detention caused thousands of his loyalists to come out into the streets and picket the Edsa Shrine in what would be called Edsa III.

Davao businessmen

In Davao City, businessmen are opposing Con-ass as a means of introducing amendments to the Constitution, an official of the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (DCCCII) said.

DCCCII has about 386 members and is considered one of the country's influential business groups.

But lawyer Bienvenido Cariaga, DCCCII president, clarified the chamber was not against the moves to amend the Constitution. He said the chamber would prefer a constitutional convention (Con-con) as a way of introducing changes in the Charter to prevent politicians from inserting provisions that would serve their interests.

He said during the chamber's general assembly on Dec. 2, at least 55 members stood up for Con-con while only two voted in favor of Con-ass. Cariaga said on Tuesday the chamber distributed survey forms and found out that 99 percent of those who answered were against Con-ass.

He said businessmen fear that the Con-ass would become a venue for politicians to introduce changes that would only further their personal agenda.

Widespread protests

Militant groups are also gearing for widespread protest actions.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) said it would mobilize its 1.5 million members to launch protest actions against Con-ass.

"We should also join our forces with that of the Church and the El Shaddai as well as other forces genuinely against Charter change and have the people's interest at heart," said KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos in an e-mailed statement.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno, Partido Manggagawa and Sanlakas said they were planning mass actions in Metro Manila and elsewhere against Con-ass.

"If they think the people would accept hook, line and sinker the Cha-cha they're cooking, they're mistaken," said KMU chair Elmer Labog.

Labog said that once the Constitution was opened to amendments or revisions, basic labor rights such as the eight-hour daily work, prohibition on contractual jobs and freedom to form unions might be removed.

Noise barrage

Members of Partido Manggagawa and allies Sanlakas and Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino held a noise barrage at noon yesterday against Con-ass at Mabuhay Rotunda in Quezon City, along Edsa at the corners of North and Timog Avenues, Malinta interchange in Valenzuela City and SM Fairview.

Today, the Ilonggos' Movement Against Arroyo's Charter Change (I March) and Bagong Alyansang Mabayan in Panay will kick off their protest actions in Iloilo City.

In Ormoc City, Msgr. Bernardo Pantin, parish priest of the Saints Peter and Paul, called on the faithful to raise a collective voice to stop the "Cha-cha" train. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Norman Bordadora and Jerome Aning in Manila; Joey Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas; Rizalene Acac and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

It's done: House set to convene constituent assembly

From page A1

1450, is titled "Resolution calling all members of Congress to propose amendments to, or revision of, the Constitution, pursuant to Section 1, Article 17 of the Constitution and for other purposes."

According to Sen. Franklin Drilon, the amendments that the House is expected to approve during the Con-ass provide for the extension of the terms of office of all incumbent officials and the lifting of term limits.

He said that under the "Simplified Proposal for Amendments" dated Dec. 4, President Macapagal-Arroyo could also seek a seat in the parliament after finishing her term as President in 2010 and possibly become the prime minister.

The three-page document (a copy of which was furnished the INQUIRER) outlines the amendments to the Constitution, which scraps the bicameral legislature in favor of a unicameral parliament and provides the mechanisms for the transition periods.

In brief, the House amendments provide that the incumbent Congress will be converted into an interim parliament immediately after the amendments are ratified in a plebiscite, and it will hold office until December 2007.

In November 2007, elections for the next "interim parliament" will be held in lieu of the May 2007 elections, and this new interim parliament will hold office until June 30, 2010.

The 12 senators whose terms last up to 2010 will become automatic members of the second interim parliament, in addition to the members to be elected from districts, regions and party-list groups.

The regular parliament will be installed after the elections in 2010 for a 5-year term. There will be no term limits for all officials.

Drilon said the trick was that all government officials would have term extensions and no term limits, to draw everyone into campaigning for the exercise.

He said Ms Arroyo could run for parliament in 2010 as representative of Pampanga.

Senate President Manuel Villar issued a warning to the administration congressmen: "The most serious problem they have to face is the people's wrath."

Villar said the Senate was prepared to file a petition in the Supreme Court "at the proper time."

"We have a consensus in the Senate that we will fight this every step of the way," he said, adding that 21 of the 23 senators had so far signed the Senate resolution opposing the House-only Con-ass.

Drilon, a former justice secretary, said the unilaterally approved Con-ass was "illegal and unconstitutional" and could not propose changes to the Charter.

Whatever amendments are approved by it are "fruits of a poisoned tree," he said.

Constitutional crisis

The House opposition led by Minority Leader Francis Escudero and his deputies, Representatives Roilo Golez, Gilbert Remulla, Teofisto Guingona III and Alan Peter Cayetano, warned of a constitutional crisis if the chamber would convene even without the participation of the Senate.

They vowed to take the issue to the Supreme Court.

Escudero warned that the battle would spill over to the streets because "the representatives here in Congress are not representing the votes and voices of the nation."

Asked why the minority had failed to convince even one member of the majority to share its view, he said: "It's not because we don't have the convincing power but maybe because their minds have long been closed [to the disadvantages of Charter change]."

Golez likened the approval of Resolution No. 197 to the attack that triggered World War II: "I just realized that today, Dec. 7, is the anniversary of the treacherous attack on Pearl Harbor. It was called a day that would live in infamy. It was an early-dawn attack, just like the early-dawn treacherous Con-ass attack on the Constitution. This day will also live in infamy."

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said yesterday's proceedings had brought Congress to "unprecedented depths of opportunism, political patronage and brazen disregard for the rule of law."

"This is a portent of ugly things to come under the GMA-JDV dictatorship. The possibilities are truly frightening, and I am afraid for our people," he said.

Stopping Cha-cha train

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan called on senators to "go beyond political self-preservation and answer the people's clamor for Charter change (Cha-cha) to break the political gridlock and to ensure the country's faster development through a genuine change in the political system."

Domogan said that contrary to the senators' perception, the Senate was not being left out. "That is a misimpression because we've always wanted the Senate to participate in the constituent assembly," he said.

But Drilon said the Senate was prepared to stop the Palace-backed "Cha-cha train."

"We will not even wait for the Cha-cha train to leave. The moment they (the House) step into the train station to buy their ticket, we will be in the Supreme Court asking for a TRO to stop the train from leaving," Drilon told the INQUIRER.

He reiterated that the Senate would intervene at the time when the matter was deemed justiciable—after the Con-ass had approved the proposed amendments and filed a petition before the Commission on Elections to set a date for and conduct a plebiscite.

He said this was the consensus reached during the Senate caucus on Wednesday night and during the discussion among the Senate's legal eagles, including himself, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and Sen. Joker Arroyo, who will again argue the Senate's position in the high court.

Crucial legal issue

Drilon said he was confident that the tribunal would sustain the Senate position that what the House did was illegal.

"The crucial legal issue is what they did [Thursday] night, the illegal and unconstitutional act of convening themselves as a Con-ass without the concurrence of the Senate," Drilon said. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

GMA gives mayors 'Christmas love'

From page A1

mas with us. And after she left, the Christmas cards were given [by the President's staff] with the P20,000 inside."

The Iloilo mayor, who spoke with the INQUIRER in a phone interview on condition of anonymity, confirmed that the P20,000 was inside an envelope that contained a Christmas card with a picture of the First Family.

"I did not know that there was money inside. I only saw it when I opened [the envelope] later," the mayor said.

Last event

The envelopes were purportedly handed out by a person whom the mayor could not identify. The person approached the tables of the mayors at the Sarabia Manor Hotel and said: "Gift *ni* ma'am."

The meeting with the region's governors and mayors was the last of the events that the President attended while in Iloilo on Tuesday.

She attended a joint birthday party of her staunch allies, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, his son and namesake Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzalez Jr., and Iloilo Mayor Jerry Treñas, at Iloilo Grand Hotel, and another birthday party—that of Augusto Syjuco, director general of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda)—at Sarabia before holding a private meeting with Western Visayas mayors and governors.

Ms Arroyo greeted her supporters and posed for pictures. She delivered a brief speech thanking the Ilonggo folk for continuing to support her administration after giving her a wide winning margin over the then presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. during the 2004 elections.

She promised to bring more projects to Iloilo, like the improvement of the city's road network on top of the ongoing P4.2-billion flood control project that she inspected during her visit.

Ms Arroyo's allies were quick to point out that her visit was not connected with moves to convene Congress into a Con-ass. But her supporters in the region issued a manifesto backing the Con-ass and the proposed shift to the unicameral parliamentary form of government.

The manifesto was signed by 101 town mayors and 14 city mayors in Western Visayas, said Mayor Raul Banias of Concepcion, Iloilo.

It was also signed by Governors Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez (Antique), Carlito Marquez (Aklan) and JC Rahman Nava (Guimaras) and Vice Gov. Isidro Zayco, representing Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon.

Gov. Vicente Bermejo of Capiz was absent. Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr., who had earlier broken ties with the President along with then Senate President Franklin Drilon, did not sign the manifesto.

Buying gifts

Manzano said she used the money to buy gifts for her town's barangay captains.

She said she did not know how much was given to the city mayors and governors because Ms Arroyo had met with them separately.

A source told the INQUIRER that the town mayors were given P20,000 each, and the city mayors, from P30,000 to P50,000.

Manzano said among the town mayors with her at the meeting with the President were Cynthia de la Cruz (Salvador Benedicto), Luis Mondia (Pulupandan), Paul Alvarez (Ilog), Jilson Tabujara (San Enrique), Jose Benito Alonso (Pontevedra), Carol Guanco (Hinigaran) and Renato Malabor (Isabela).

Silay Mayor Carlo Gamban denied receiving money, adding that he was not aware that any was given to the city mayors present.

When reached for comment, Zayco said the manifesto signing was initiated by Perez. He said the mayors of Negros Occidental who met with the President on Tuesday in Iloilo also signed it.

Reaching out

He said he did not receive any money and did not know if the mayors did.

In Manila, Malacañang and its allies in the House were moving to reach out to senators in an effort to convince the latter to take part in the Con-ass.

Ms Arroyo's political adviser Gabriel Claudio yesterday said there was still time for senators and congressmen to talk things over.

"The time between now and the assembly on Tuesday affords a sufficient chance for members of both chambers to reach out to each other," Claudio said in a phone interview.

He said the Palace was confident that members of the House would be able to convince the senators of "the wisdom, legality, judiciousness and fairness of their plans for Con-ass."

"We also continue to have faith in the statesmanship of our senators to respond with sobriety and open-mindedness," he said. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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EZ2
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SIX DIGIT
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All in exact order

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Evening 6 9 6

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
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Japanese PM here today

TOKYO—JAPAN'S PRIME MINISTER EMbarks this week on his third overseas trip in as many months, leaving behind falling poll ratings, bickering within his ruling party and criticism he's ignoring simmering social problems at home.

Shinzo Abe heads to the Philippines on Friday to meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo, followed by a summit of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the second annual East Asia summit.

The Japanese leader, who took office in September, plans to seek further regional backing for tough UN-imposed sanctions against North Korea and a resumption of international talks on dismantling its nuclear weapons program.

Trade ties, energy security and efforts to foster regional cooperation and integration are also on the agenda for the talks in Manila and Cebu.

Abe, who traveled to China and South Korea in October and to an Asia-Pacific regional summit last month, leaves behind some brewing domestic disputes that have put an early end to his honeymoon with the Japanese public.

Abe, 52, enjoyed public approval ratings of near 70 percent in September amid an economic recovery and expectations he would carry on predecessor Junichiro Koizumi's reforms, such as privatizing the nation's postal system.

North Korea is expected to be a prime concern at the Philippine meetings. The reclusive communist country conducted a nuclear test on Oct. 9, triggering intense international concern and UN Security Council sanctions. *AP*

Bodies wash ashore 1 week after 'Reming'

LEGAZPI CITY—ONE WEEK AFter typhoon-spawned killer mudslides ravaged the Bicol region, dead bodies continued to wash onto the shores of coastal villages as heavy rains hampered rescue and relief efforts yesterday.

Government officials called for a massive relocation of residents from vulnerable areas as the toll of dead and missing continued to rise, and more aid poured into the region.

Even as the relief teams struggled against the heavy rains, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) warned that a tropical depression was expected to pass near Bicol in two days.

Supertyphoon "Reming," which hit the country last week, triggered deadly volcanic mudflows that cascaded down Mayon volcano, burying dozens of villages near this provincial capital.

The Office of Civil Defense yesterday said it had confirmed 1,316 dead or missing from the storm, even as rescue teams found more bodies in the mud.

In the coastal village of Puro, two decomposed bodies washed up on the shore after heavy rains, residents and rescuers said.

Rescue teams said the bodies may have been washed into the sea from the slopes of the villages of Mayon after being buried by the mudslides. *(Related story on Page A9)*

Miners to the rescue

Late Wednesday, volunteers from local mining companies, acting as rescue teams, said they had found four more bodies as they dug through the mud near Legazpi City.

Stunned residents returning to the village of Isarog searched for their homes beneath the deluge of mud that covered their community, and tried to salvage refrigerators, televisions and washing machines.

In the village of Padang, miners used machinery to try to pinpoint the site where residents said a truck full of people was overturned and buried by the mudslide.

But heavy rains made digging difficult and the truck's exact location could not be established.

Bicol continued to suffer from lack of power, telephone and water services, but banks in most of Legazpi opened for the first time in a week, resulting in huge lines and crowds. Tellers had to ration the money they gave out as people sought to withdraw huge amounts.

Anthony Golez, deputy head of the OCD, said water and medicine were needed for the thousands of people displaced by the storm and the mudflows.

Officials said the government would have to get serious about relocating the thousands of people who live on the slopes of Mayon, a still-active volcano.

"It appears that the best option is the permanent evacuation of all the families living within the hazard zones of the Mayon volcano," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo would make the "clear-cut decisions... to end the perennial cycle of death and destruction," and was willing to allocate the resources needed to carry out the permanent evacuation, although he did not specify the numbers involved.

1.6 million affected

Although Mayon is active and has threatened surrounding areas with eruptions in recent years, many villagers refuse to leave their farms on the slopes of Mayon due to the fertile volcanic soil.

Around 30,000 residents of villages on the slopes of Mayon were forced to evacuate in August when the volcano showed signs of erupting. But they returned home in September after it simmered down.

More than 1.6 million people were affected by Reming when it passed through the country last week and estimates of damage were placed at P1.2 billion.

Vice President Noli de Castro yesterday ordered the housing agencies—Pag-IBIG Fund, Social Housing Finance Corp. and National Housing Authority—to grant a six-month moratorium on the payment of housing loans by those affected by the supertyphoon.

De Castro, who chairs the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, said he personally saw and met thousands of families in Naga City who were left homeless by the typhoon when he visited the areas affected with the President. *AFP and Cynthia D. Balana*

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Matatag na haligi ng inyong kinabukasan

Hunt on for killers of OSG lawyer, son

Quiapo cops sacked for laxity

By Tina G. Santos

POLICEMEN AT THE PLAZA MIRANDA DEtachment in Quiapo were relieved yesterday for failing to implement an order clearing the area of vendors who allegedly used the sale of herbs as a front for selling abortion pills.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, who issued the order, said that during a surprise inspection, he saw herbal vendors still selling in the area beside the Police Community Precinct.

The mayor earlier instructed Manila Police District acting director Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa to ensure that no abortion-inducing substances were sold anywhere in the city.

"These illegal activities continue to proliferate because authorities not only allow them but even protect them," an irate Atienza said.

Last week, agents of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested six herbal traders selling Cytotec, a drug for treating gastric ulcers but allegedly also used to induce abortion.

NBI says motive for slays could be work-related

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Jocelyn R. Uy

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI) is conducting its own investigation into the killing of a solicitor general's assistant and his son by two unidentified armed men on Wednesday morning in Parañaque City.

The suspects gunned down Nestor Ballocillo, 57, a lawyer at the Office of the Solicitor General, and his son Benedict, 23. Police have launched a manhunt for the assailants.

Parañaque City police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles released yesterday sketches of the suspects based on witnesses' accounts.

NBI National Capital Region (NCR) Office executive assistant Rommel Vallejo said the motive in the killing could have been work-related. "The victim's family and staff told me that nobody they knew had a personal grudge against (Nestor) Ballocillo," Vallejo said.

The NBI official added that the victim was described as "kindhearted." The elder Ballocillo maintained a low-profile, often choosing to commute to work instead of using his car, Vallejo was told.

"The killing could have something to do with sensitive cases he was handling, including the Piatco case," Vallejo said. He added that they were gathering intelligence reports on possible "guns-for-hire" involved in the crime.

"Ballocillo's son was not a target but represented collateral damage and was eliminated as a possible witness," the NBI official said.

The two victims were on their way to the elder Ballocillo's Makati City office before heading to Subic for a seminar when two armed men cornered them around 7 a.m. in Barangay San Antonio. Both were shot in the head at close range. Only Ballocillo's briefcase, which reportedly contained important documents, was missing. The suspects did not even take the victims' cell phones, police said.

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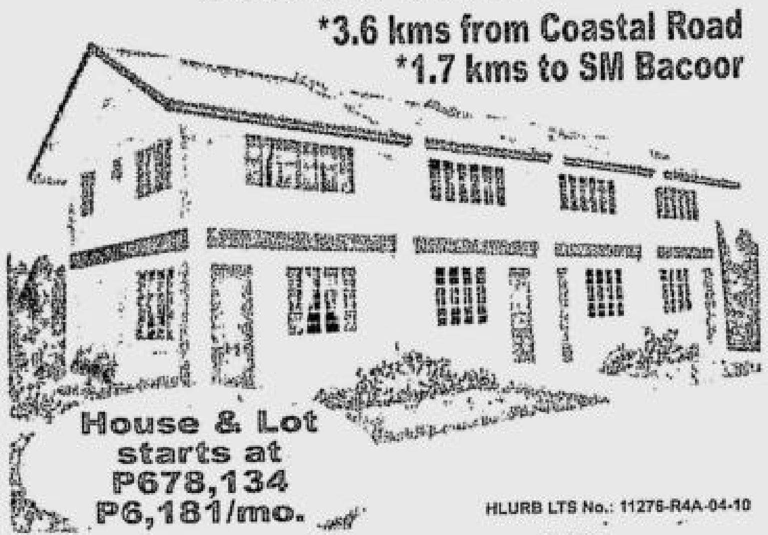

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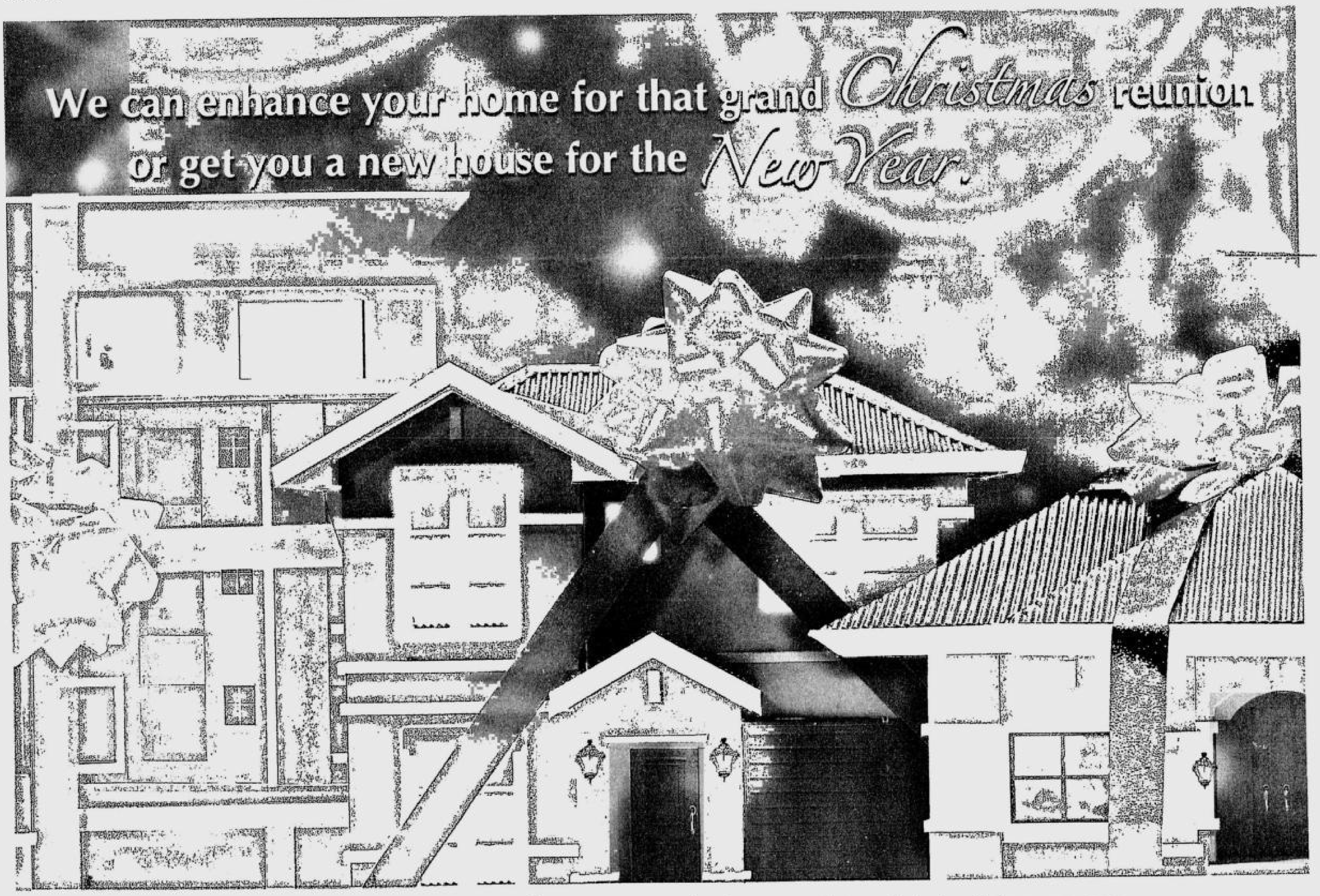

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Jeepney groups give in to fare rollback

By Riza T. Olchondra

JEEPNEY PASSENGERS WILL PAY ONLY P7 instead of P7.50 starting Monday, following the signing of a Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) resolution by transport groups for a provisional fare reduction in the National Capital Region, Central Luzon, and Southern Tagalog.

Student and senior citizen discounts will be based on the P7 basic fare during the provisional period, which would last 30 to 45 days starting Monday.

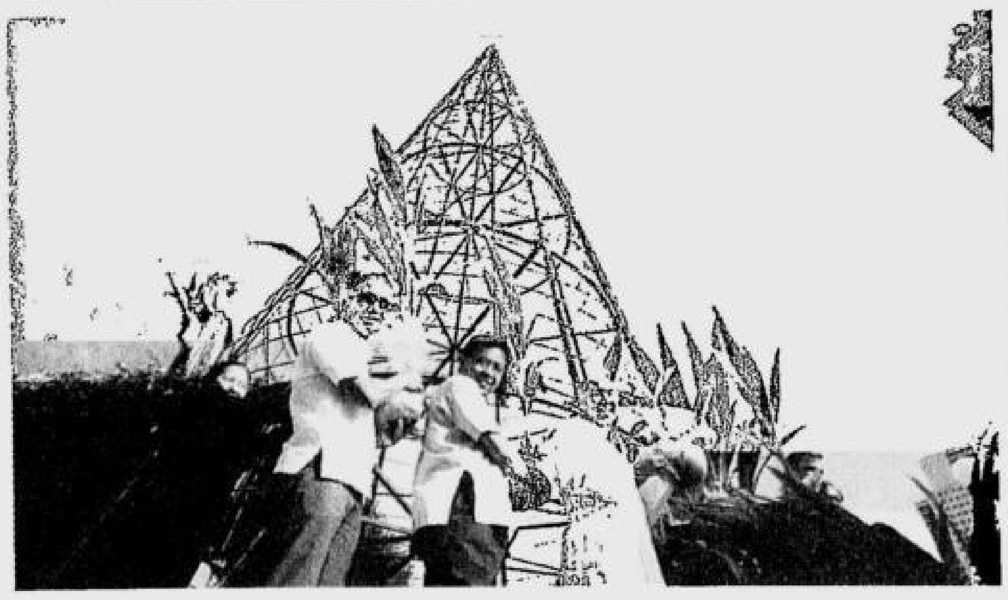
Apart from the P 0.50 rollback in the basic fare for the first four kilometers, a P0.10 cut for every succeeding kilometer will also be enforced. This means that the P1.25 rate for every additional kilometer will become P1.15.

The LTFRB had considered the rollback last month when it received a petition from the Tulip Urban Poor Homeowners Association Inc., who cited stable oil prices and fuel discounts for public utility jeepney drivers.

The United Transport Coalition (UTC) leaders readily expressed support for the rollback on condition that oil prices remain stable until yearend.

The coalition members formalized their support yesterday on Thursday by signing the LTFRB resolution for the provisional rollback.

The UTC is made up of Fejodap (Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines), Altodap (Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines), MJODA (Makati Jeepney Operators and Drivers Alliance), PCDO-ACTO (Philippine Confederation of Drivers and Operators-Alliance of Concerned Transport Organization), Pasang Masda (Pangkalahatang Sanggunian Manila and Suburbs Drivers' Association Nationwide Inc.), and NTU (National Transport Workers Union) and Pinag-Isang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operators Nationwide (Piston).



MEMBERS of the Edsa Shrine Rectors Council—(from left) Cynthia Lazo, an unidentified volunteer, Fr. Ben Beltran and Fr. Vic Apacible, Edsa Shrine parish priest—unveil the "biggest living Christmas tree" adorned with coconut seedlings.

JOAN BONDOC

Christmas 'Tree of Life' grows on Edsa

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A CHRISTMAS TREE GROWS ON Edsa—literally.

Church leaders and volunteer groups have started mounting a 20-foot tall Christmas tree on top of the Edsa Shrine adorned with 1,000 coconut seedlings from the Philippine Coconut Authority.

They call the decoration "tree of life" not only because of the coconut seedlings but also because several projects are planned to complement the traditional Christmas symbol.

Each seedling will get a donation of P1,000 each from private donors. The seedlings will be named after their donors.

After the holiday season, they will be planted at the Smokey Mountain in Manila by street children.

Elaborate Christmas lights and a thousand lanterns designed by street children under the care of the shrine will illuminate the inverted cone-shaped tree. The lanterns will be sold later for P100 each.

Proceeds from the projects will go to the Tulay ng Kabataan Foundation, which has been sending street children to school and trying to keep them away from violence and drug addiction.

"We want our activities to be a venue for those who are blessed to share with the less fortunate," Danny Olivares of the Wellspring of Life, a community under the shrine, told the INQUIRER.

The charismatic community that is implementing the program chose coconut seedlings because the tree "reflects the Filipino people" The coconut not only had many uses but was also sturdy and deep-rooted.

Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales will bless the Christmas Tree of Life in the afternoon of Dec. 15. The lighting will coincide not only with the first anticipated *Simbang Gabi* but also with the 17th anniversary of the shrine.

The shrine has lined up other activities for the poor for Christmas and for its anniversary. Seventeen carts loaded with grocery items will be given to deserving families to help them start a business.

Boxes have been distributed at the entrances for people to drop their wish lists. The lists will be blessed at the altar on Dec. 23.

The shrine (Our Lady Queen of Peace quasi-Parish) was built in honor of the 1986 People Power Revolution.

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Ombudsman junks cases vs Munti officials

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MUNTINLUPA CITY OFFICIALS YESterday expressed relief that the Office of the Ombudsman dismissed graft charges filed by a jeepney operator against 20 city officials, two former officials and five police officers.

The Ombudsman, in a resolution dated Nov. 9, dismissed again for lack of probable cause cases filed in 2002 against Mayor Jaime Fresnedi, then city councilor; and incumbent Vice Mayor Aldrin San Pedro, city administrator Henry Reyes, former Vice Mayor Vicente Chua, former city attorney Jovito Salvador and 15 other officials, as well as police officers Supt. Avelino Castro, SPO2 Jaime Vega, SPO2 Englando Gabriela, SPO2 Juanito Balahadia and SPO1 Roberto Valderama.

The case filed by Efren Estareja, president of ATO-I Transportation Services Inc., was already dismissed in December last year and the Ombudsman reiterated its decision last month after reviewing the case.

Estareja claimed the local government caused the firm damage and demonstrated prejudice when it entered into a contract of lease, construction and operation with three private firms for the Alabang Jeepney Terminal.

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COMPARATIVE PREVAILING RETAIL PRICES IN METRO MANILA WETMARKETS

COMMODITIES	PREVAILING PRICE (in Php) Current (04 Dec. 2006)	Last Month (06 Nov. 2006)
CANNED FISH (155 g)		
555	10.00	10.00
Ligo	10.50	10.50
Master	10.50	10.50
CANNED MEAT		
Luncheon Meat		
Maling (397 g)	41.00	41.00
Purefoods, Chinese style (165 g)	22.00	22.00
Meat Loaf		
Philips (200 g)	20.00	20.00
Argentina (170 g)	15.00	15.00
Gusto (220 g)	18.50	18.50
Corned Beef		
Argentina (175 g)	27.00	27.00
Argentina (260 g)	37.00	37.00
Purefoods (150 g)	33.00	32.00
INSTANT NOODLES (Chicken Flavor)		
Lucky Me (55 g)	5.00	5.00
Maggi (55 g)	5.50	5.50
Payless (55 g)	5.00	5.00
PROCESSED MILK		
Condensed Filled		
Alaska (300 ml)	39.00	39.00
Carnation (301 ml)	35.00	35.00
Evaporated Filled		
Alaska (370 ml)	29.00	29.00
Carnation (378 ml)	28.00	28.00
Powdered Filled		
Alaska (180 g)	40.00	40.00
Alaska (80 g)	18.00	18.00
Bear Brand (180 g)	40.00	40.00
Bear Brand (80 g)	18.00	18.00
COFFEE (Refill) (25 g)		
Blend 45	14.00	14.00
Nescafe	17.00	17.00
Cafe Puro	16.00	16.00
CEMENT, Portland (40kg, bag)	170.00	170.00

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COMPARATIVE PREVAILING RETAIL PRICES OF SELECTED NOCHE BUENA PRODUCTS

COMMODITIES	PREVAILING PRICE (in Php) Current (05 Dec 2006)	Last Year (23 Dec 2005)
Ham		
Purefood (Fiesta, 1kg)	354.00	330.75
Purefoods (Pear-shaped, 800g)	194.00	194.50
CDO Hamon De Bola (850g)	220.00	
Pasta (Spaghetti)		
Del Monte (1kg)	55.50	54.50
Fiesta (1Kg)	46.00	41.50
Ideal (1kg)	49.90	49.90
Royal	60.25	56.25
Cheese		
Cheezee (200g)	30.00	29.05
Eden (200g)	31.00	32.25
Kraft Cheddar (200g)	49.50	49.50
Magnolia Cheddar (200g)	48.25	48.30
Queso (200g)	30.25	30.75
Tomato Sauce		
Del Monte (1kg)	60.00	55.10
Del Monte (250g)	16.65	15.00
Hunts (1 liter)	53.10	53.00
Hunts (250g)	16.00	13.75

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COMPARATIVE PREVAILING RETAIL PRICES IN METRO MANILA WETMARKETS

COMMODITIES	SPECIFICATON	PREVAILING PRICE (in Php per kilo) Current (05 Dec. 2006)	Last Month (07 Nov. 2006)
Rice			
NFA	Well milled	18.00	18.00
Ordinary rice	Regular milled	22.00	22.00
Special coml. rice	Well milled	24.00	24.00
Fish	(Fresh and firm)		
Bangus	Med (3-4 pcs/kg)	90.00	90.00
Tilapia	Med (5-6 pcs/kg)	70.00	70.00
Meat & Poultry			
Pork liempo	Pork belly	140.00	140.00
Whole chicken	Fully dressed	110.00	110.00
Chicken egg	Medium (per piece)	3.75	3.75
Sugar			
Refined sugar		36.00	38.00
Brown sugar		32.00	32.00
Cooking Oil			
Lapad bottle	Quote in 375 ml bottle	15.00	15.00

Holy Mass on the Web offered soon

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

ACCESS TO HOLY MASS WILL SOON BE just a click away.

Hoping to spread the "good news" to a bigger audience, a charismatic community at the Edsa Shrine is planning to launch a "web cast" of Masses starting next year.

"This is especially for those who cannot attend Masses, like those with disabilities or those working in call centers," Danny Olivares of the Wellspring of Life Community told the INQUIRER.

Supported by a newly established Internet service provider, Olivares said they were planning to start the live web cast of Masses in February.

The live web cast could be accessed in the new official website of the Our Lady Queen of Peace Quasi-Parish, more popularly known as the Edsa Shrine. The website is www.edsashrine.com.

"The web will be a tool that we can use in a positive sense. This will help in spreading the good news," Shrine parish priest Fr. Vic Apacible told the INQUIRER.

The shrine, built in honor of the 1986 People Power, is usually crowded with more than 600 churchgoers attending Mass, particularly because of its strategic location within the busy Ortigas Center.

Olivares said parishioners could already access the website where they can check the schedule of Masses and other church activities, read messages from Shrine officials and post their own messages.

Parishioners can also seek spiritual advice online.

"We have volunteers who offer free counseling. Their e-mail addresses are posted on the website," Olivares said.

Parishioners can e-mail a volunteer and get his/her reply the same way.

The website has 17 e-mail addresses, including those of Apacible and the two other priests at the shrine, Olivares said.

Olivares has a temporary staff maintaining the website, which is also supported by service provider Broadband Philippines.

METROBRIEFS

TV exec slay suspects fall

TWO MALE masseurs have admitted killing ABS-CBN executive producer Joselito "Joey" Siervo last month inside his house in Quezon City, a police official said. Quezon City Police District director Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula said Christopher B.Dagusan, a former watchman, and Alfie R.Cabatuando of Camarin, Caloocan City were nabbed inside a restaurant in Banawe, Quezon City by Criminal Investigation Unit agents led by Supt. Franklin Mabanag. Siervo was found dead with at least 12 stab wounds inside his rented apartment on Nov. 3. The QCPD director said the suspects admitted to the killing and disclosed that Siervo was a regular customer. They said it was the victim who called up Cabatuando before dawn on Nov.3 to come to his house and bring Dagusan "because someone wanted to meet him." "They admitted killing the victim after a heated argument, but said it was not planned," Gatdula told the INQUIRER. He said the suspects, who were arrested with the coordination of an informant, surrendered the murder weapon and the victim's digital camera. Gatdula said the suspects also turned over to the police Siervo's two SIM cards which, according to the informant, were alternately used by the suspects in calling her. The suspects were also able to withdraw a total of P18,000 using the victim's ATM card after the incident, Gatdula added.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Gifts from Winner

THREE hundred senior citizens and abandoned children at the Hospicio de San Jose in Manila will not be forgotten in the season of gift-giving by Winner Foundation, an organization of clean and green environment advocates. Regina Paterno, president of Winner, said the gift-giving event, which will be held on Dec. 12, is part of their activities for December. "This has become a yearly tradition for us," she said. "We've been doing this for the past eight years." The elderly and the young wards will each receive a package containing canned goods, clothing and other personal items. "The real joy of the season is in loving and sharing God's blessings with our less fortunate fellowmen," Paterno said.

Tina G. Santos

Drive vs bad cops

NATIONAL Capital Region Police Office Director Reynaldo Varilla yesterday promised to continue going after erring policemen in the metropolis. He said he had already dismissed at least 66 policemen since he assumed his post four months ago. "We will go after them. We will cleanse our ranks," Varilla said during a police dialog with barangay chairs in eastern Metro yesterday morning. Varilla admitted that most of the policemen he had dismissed for offenses ranging from habitual absences to involvement in illegal drugs were new hires.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Torres High reunion

CLASS '58 of the Torres High School will hold their reunion at Jade Vine, UN Avenue cor. Bocobo St., Manila tomorrow. Inquiries may be addressed to any of the following: Leonora Ng, tel. no. 2515102; Sortero Mendoza, tel. no. 9415770; or to THS '58 Association president Cora Buntan, tel. no. 8286423.

NBI looking for Dolphy grandson

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI) is now looking for another grandson of comedy king Dolphy, who allegedly mauled to death a Tondo resident on Monday.

Suspect Rowell Quizon is reportedly the older brother of Nicolo Paulo, who was arrested last month at a rehabilitation center in Taguig City for allegedly killing a factory worker, according to NBI investigators.

Nicolo Paulo was earlier reported to be the son of Wilfredo "Freddie" Quizon, Dolphy's son who passed away last year due to injuries he sustained after he fell inside his home.

Freddie was the comedian's son with "Gracita" while Nicolo is Freddie's son with "Nelda," who hails from Tondo, according to Dolphy's longtime publicist and friend Nene Riego in an earlier interview.

"We are looking for Rowell because he has to answer the possible charges against him," NBI National Capital Region (NCR) Office chief Ruel Lasala said in an interview yesterday.

An initial investigation conducted by the NBI showed that the victim, Jeffrey Vergara, who was then celebrating his birthday, was drinking with friends outside his home at No. 64 Pilapil St., Tondo, Manila shortly after midnight on Dec. 4.

Vergara's common-law wife Berna Fernandez told the NBI that Rowell and at least three other companions, including a certain "Marlon," arrived at the scene at 2 a.m. and greeted the victim.

Without any warning, the suspect allegedly began beating Vergara, who lost consciousness after his head hit the pavement.

Fernandez also told investigators that the suspects also hit her husband's head with a beer bottle.

Believing that Vergara was only slightly hurt and sleepy after the drinking session, the family waited until Monday afternoon before bringing him to the Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Vergara however died shortly after his family sought the NBI's assistance on Dec. 5, investigators said.

Caloocan City Hall phone line back with 2 new numbers

By Nancy C. Carvajal

AFTER ITS TELEPHONE SERVICE WAS cut off for two months because of unpaid bills, the Caloocan City Hall can now be reached with not only one but two telephones. The new telephone numbers are 2888821 and 2884096.

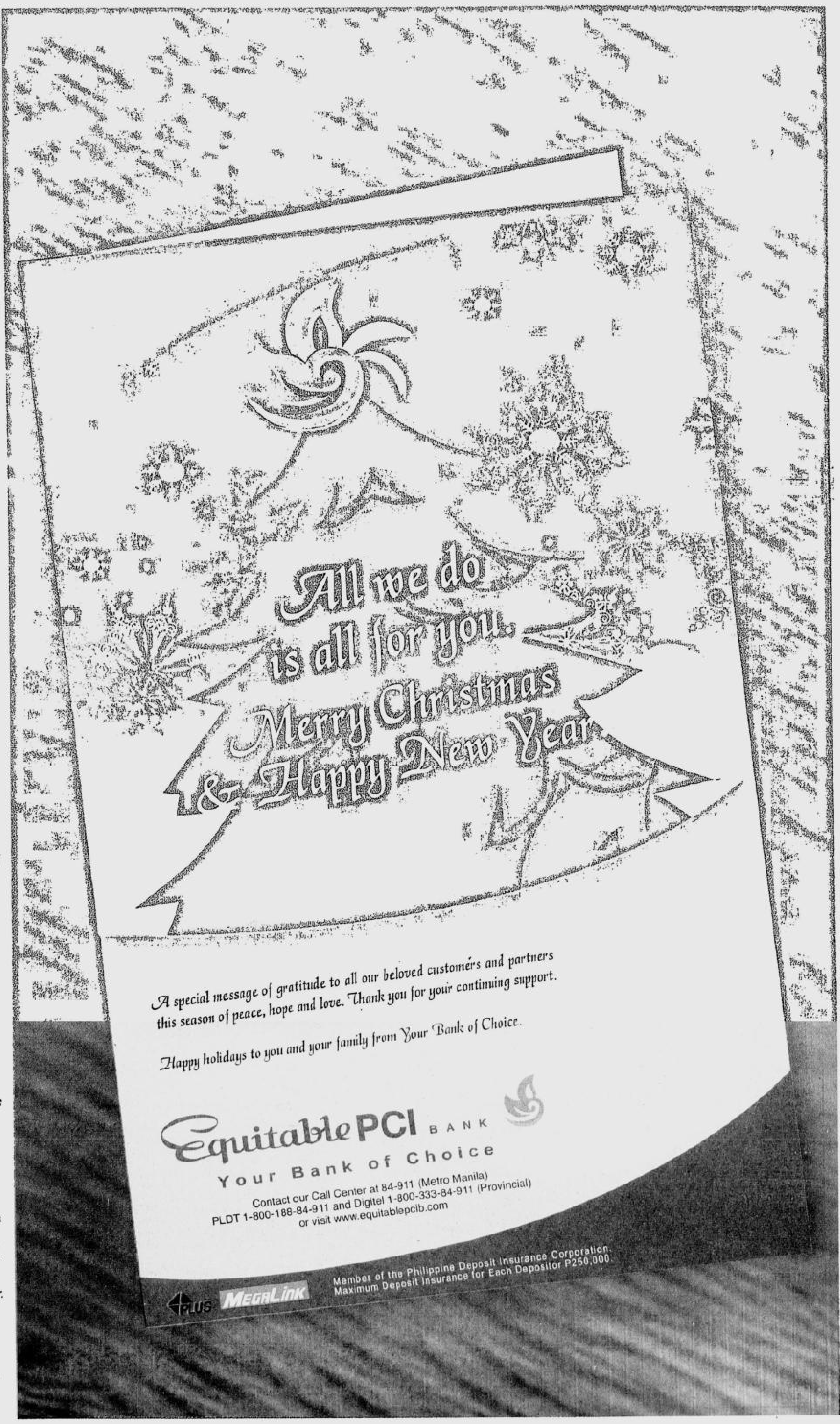
City Mayor Enrico Echiverri said the phone line was restored and an additional trunk line was installed after talks with the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company.

"Calling City Hall is now a lot easier with the two lines working 24 hours a day," Echiverri said.

The mayor attributed the disruption in service to "unpaid bills during the time of former Mayor Rey Malonzo."

Malonzo has denied the accusations and said everything was in order when he left the mayor's office.

He said Echiverri's camp had used the issue "to cover up their illegal practices."



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PLUS MEGALINK

Australia lifts ban on cloning human embryos

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIA OVERturned a ban on cloning human embryos for stem cell research Wednesday, despite heartfelt arguments against from both Prime Minister John Howard and the new leader of the opposition.

The late-night vote in Australia's House of Representatives clears the way for researchers here to engage in therapeutic cloning, which scientists hope will one day lead to cures for debilitating diseases such as Parkinson's and dementia.

However, opponents of the controversial process have called it immoral and said it would take science too far.

The results of the ballot mean the Senate and the country's Lower House have now supported the move, which will become law.

Members of parliament were permitted a rare conscience vote after an afternoon of passionate debate.

Despite strong support for the bill, both Howard and new Labor leader Kevin Rudd made impassioned 11th-hour speeches against the legislation, and said they would be voting against repealing the ban.

Howard said his decision was not an easy one to reach.

"I decided to vote against this legislation for the reason that in the end you have to take a stand for some absolutes in our society, and I think what we're talking about here is a moral absolute and that is why I cannot support the legislation," he said.

"I don't think the science has shifted enough to warrant the parliament changing its view, and for that reason I'm going to vote against the bill."

Just part way through his first week as opposition leader, Rudd said he would also vote against the legislation, even though he had supported a bill four years ago to allow limited research on embryonic stem cells.

An emotional Rudd said that first decision was made with the blessing of his late mother, a Parkinson's disease sufferer.

"My mum died two years ago, so she's not here to ask about this one," he said, expressing concern that by overturning the ban parliament was crossing a moral boundary.

Treasurer Peter Costello and Health Minister Tony Abbott also spoke against the technology.

However, Education and Science Minister Julie Bishop and Defense Minister Brendan Nelson said the legislation offered hope to sufferers of conditions like diabetes and motor neurone disease.

During fierce debate, critics of the private member's bill sought to scuttle the legislation with an amendment that would have sent the legislation back to the Senate, where it passed by just two votes last month.

However, the House of Representatives voted down the amendment, which would have prevented stem cells being extracted from the eggs of aborted late-term female fetuses.

The overwhelming success of the bill paves the way for the implementation of laws enshrining the recommendations of the Lockhart review into stem cell research, which proposed a new process of embryonic cloning be allowed.

While the bill passed the Senate by the narrow margin of 34 votes to 32, members of parliament elected not to have their choice recorded, although an earlier conscience vote returned a result of 82 to 62. *AFP*

Nasa detects signs of liquid water on Mars

WASHINGTON—NASA EXPERTS SAID Wednesday they have detected evidence that liquid water existed on the surface of Mars in recent years, giving weight to hopes that signs of life on the Red Planet could still be found.

An orbiter going around Mars has photographed gullies which indicated that water had flowed there in the past decade.

"These observations give the strongest evidence to date that water still flows occasionally on the surface of Mars," said Michael Mayer, head of Nasa's Washington-based Mars Exploration Program.

"We had evidence of ancient water. But today we're talking about liquid water that is present right now on Mars," said Kenneth Edgett, a scientist at Malin Space Science Systems in California who took part in the research.

The finger-shaped gullies are each several hundred meters (yards) long. They are "what you would expect to see if the material were carried by flowing water," according to Michael Malin, the lead researcher in the study of pictures taken by the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Mars Global Surveyor in 2004 and 2005.

Stargazers have long wondered whether there has been life on Mars, and the presence of liquid water is considered essential for it.

The surface of Mars is too cold for liquid water to exist, but scientists believe underground water filtered to the surface carrying debris downslope long enough to form the gullies before it froze.

The light-colored deposits in the gullies, they said, could be from surface frost replenished by ice from inside the deposit.

The Mars Global Surveyor orbiter has taken 240,000 pictures of the surface of Mars since 1997. The space agency has not been able to contact the orbiter since November, however. *AFP*

HIGHEST TRANSGENDER US OFFICIAL
Kim Coco Iwamoto photographed after being sworn in as a new Board of Education member for the state of Hawaii, Dec. 6, in Honolulu. Iwamoto will now be the highest elected transgender official in the United States.
AP

THE BLOOD IS BACK.

The long wait is over as the hottest local anthology returns. Youngblood 3 is in the house, loaded with the best essays from 1999 to 2004 in the most concentrated Youngblood package yet. Bear witness as a generation continues its evolution: this is the Filipino youth at their most honest and most eloquent. Here are the essays that matter from the newspaper that started it all. "Youngblood" is the young Filipino—unplugged.

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Heart stents face review

WASHINGTON—US advisers will start considering on Thursday the risks of drug-coated stents implanted in millions of heart patients, examining evidence showing the devices may lead to dangerous blood clots.

Drug-coated stents, sold in the United States by Johnson & Johnson and Boston Scientific Corp., are used to prop open arteries after doctors clear them of blockages.

The devices were hailed as a major advance just three years ago because the drug coating on the tiny mesh tubes cuts the chances of an artery closing again, a problem reported with about a quarter of bare-metal stents.

Now, doctors are rethinking their quick adoption of drug-coated stents after blood clots appeared in some patients months later. Blood clots can lead to heart attacks and death.

Nearly 6 million patients worldwide are estimated to have received drug-coated stents. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Soldiers seized by Hezbollah seriously hurt

JERUSALEM—The two Israeli soldiers seized by Hezbollah in a cross-border raid that sparked the Lebanon war in July were taken away in serious condition, a senior military source said Wednesday. "According to tests and reports gathered at the scene of the attack immediately after the raid, one of the soldiers was in critical condition and the other in serious condition," the official said, on condition of anonymity. The official quoted an internal military report, which provided the first public details of the two servicemen's condition at the time of their capture on July 12. Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev were taken into Lebanon after Hezbollah militants attacked two military armed vehicles in Israel patrolling the Lebanese border in a cross-border raid that killed three other soldiers. The raid sparked Israel's 34-day war with Lebanon's Shiite militia that ended with a UN-brokered ceasefire on Aug. 14. *AFP*

Canada's top policeman quits

OTTAWA—Canada's top policeman resigned on Wednesday, a day after he admitted misleading legislators about how his force had botched the case of a Canadian deported to Syria by US agents. The position of Royal Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli had become increasingly untenable since September, when an official report said police had falsely told Washington that software engineer Maher Arar was a suspected Islamic extremist. Critics said the case showed that Canadian authorities had been too eager to share information with the United States in their rush to boost security after the Sept. 11 suicide attacks, and had compromised national sovereignty. US agents arrested Arar in 2002 during a stopover in New York and accused him of belonging to al-Qaida. Arar, who holds dual Canadian-Syrian citizenship, was deported to Syria, where he says he was repeatedly tortured. He was released in 2003 and is now suing Ottawa for damages. *Reuters*

Bolton says he won't spill 'guts'

BOLTON

UNITED NATIONS—US Ambassador John Bolton returned to the United Nations for the first time since President George W. Bush accepted his resignation and made clear he had no intention of spilling his "guts" about anything. When a reporter asked what his final analysis of the United Nations was, noting that he had once said the UN could stand to lose the top 10 floors—where all the top executives work—without much of a loss, Bolton wouldn't bite. During Bolton's 16 months at the UN, the fine points of diplomacy took a back seat to his aggressive pursuit of Bush's global agenda, which ranged from pressing for sanctions against North Korea and Iran to installing UN peacekeepers in conflict-wracked Darfur; and to overhauling the 61-year-old United Nations to meet 21st century challenges. *AP*

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Fiji's 'PM': Coup illegal, but democracy overrated

SENILAGAKALI

SUVA—FIJI'S NEWLY IMPOSED premier admitted Thursday the army ouster of the elected government was illegal and that elections could be two years away, but said the nation did not need Western-style democracy.

In his first public comments a day after being sworn in, caretaker Prime Minister Jona Senilagakali defended the overthrow of what he termed a corrupt government and warned Australia and New Zealand not to interfere.

He was speaking as military commander Voreqe Bainimarama, leader of Tuesday's coup, cracked down on dissenters by dismissing a quiver of senior police officers and civil servants after warning he would not tolerate dissent and would forcibly crush revolt.

"It's an illegal takeover to clean up the mess of a much bigger illegal activity of the previous government," Senilagakali told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. (ABC).

"So what choice do you have? To me, it's better that you do this illegal activity to clean up a much bigger, illegal mess so that we can bring peace... to the people of Fiji," he said.

The 77-year-old military doctor, who said Bainimarama ordered him to become prime minister, said fresh democratic elections in Fiji were "12 months to two years" away when the military rulers determined the time was right.

Bainimarama said Tuesday fresh elections would be held when the country was stable again, but gave no date.

A day after the military chief announced he was suspending provisions of Fiji's bill of rights and would use force against any uprising, Senilagakali said Fiji did not need Western-style democracy.

"That is the problem with you people—democracy," he retorted angrily when asked by the ABC if he was troubled by the suspension of key civil rights in the Pacific island country.

"Democracy may be alright for certain places in the world but I don't think the type of democracy Fiji needs" is the same as that enjoyed by the people of Australia and New Zealand, he said.

He warned the regional powers to stay out of Fiji's internal affairs and said the military regime would seek help from countries such as China, Taiwan and Indonesia if economic sanctions were imposed. *AFP*

Cheney's gay daughter pregnant

MARY Cheney

NEW YORK—CONSERVATIVE leaders voiced dismay Wednesday at news that Mary Cheney, the lesbian daughter of Vice President Dick Cheney, is pregnant, while a gay-rights group said the vice president faces "a lifetime of sleepless nights" for serving in an administration that has opposed recognition of same-sex couples.

Mary Cheney, 37, and her partner of 15 years, Heather Poe, 45, are expecting a baby in late spring, said Lea Anne McBride, a spokesperson for the vice president.

Mary Cheney was an aide to her father during the 2004 campaign, and now is vice president for consumer advocacy at AOL. She and Poe moved from Colorado to Virginia a year ago to be closer to the Cheney family.

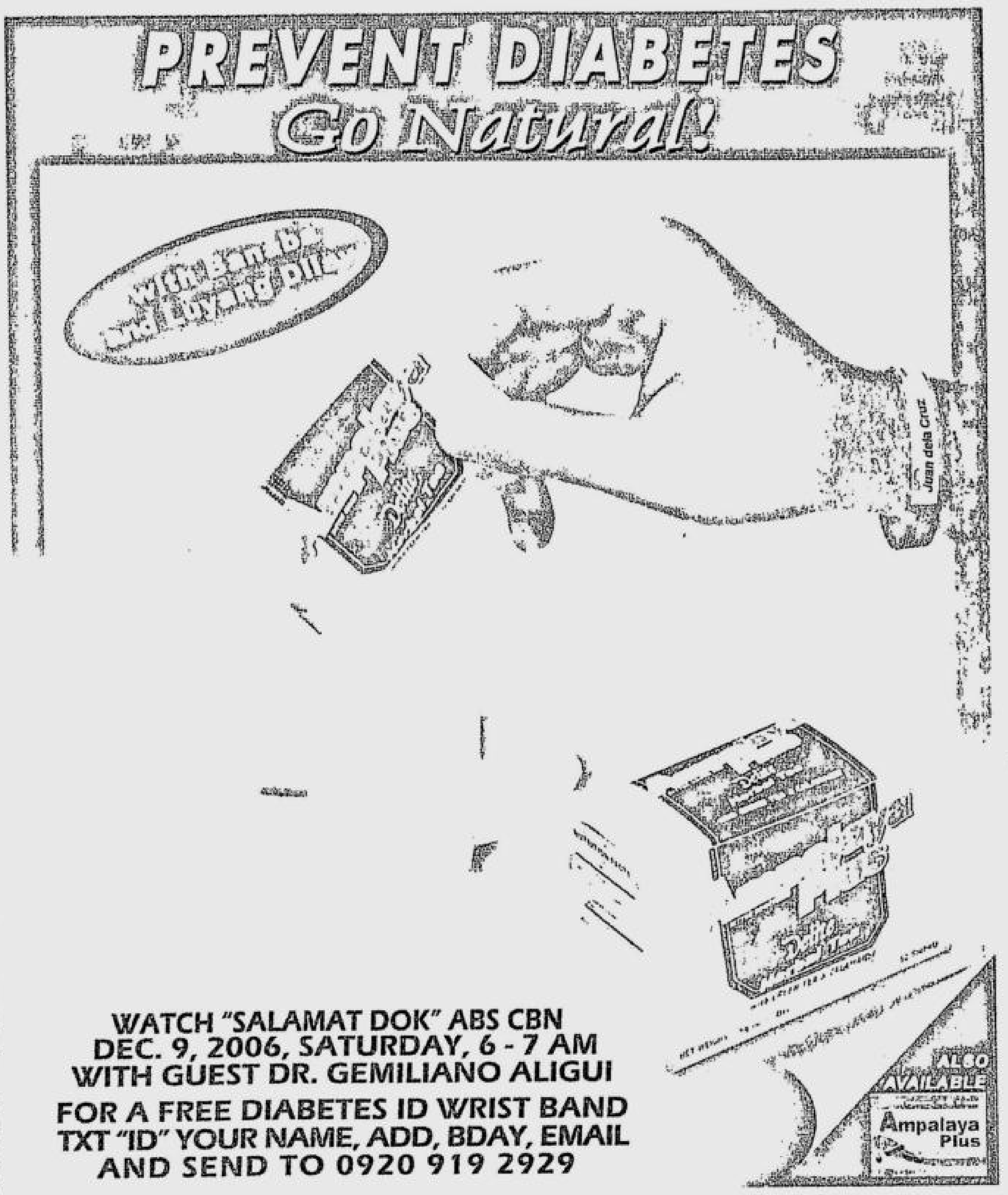
Family Pride, which advocates on behalf of gay and lesbian families, noted that Virginia last month became one of 27 states with a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.

"Unless they move to a handful of less restrictive states, Heather will never be able to have a legal relationship with her child," said Family Pride executive director Jennifer Chrisler.

The couple "will quickly face the reality that no matter how loved their child will be. ... he or she will never have the same protections that other children born to heterosexual couples enjoy," Chrisler said.

"Grandfather Cheney will no doubt face a lifetime of sleepless nights as he reflects on the irreparable harm he and his administration have done to the millions of American gay and lesbian parents and their children."

For years, Mary Cheney's openness about her sexual orientation had posed a dilemma for conservative activists who admire Dick Cheney's stance on many issues but consider homosexuality a sin. *AP*



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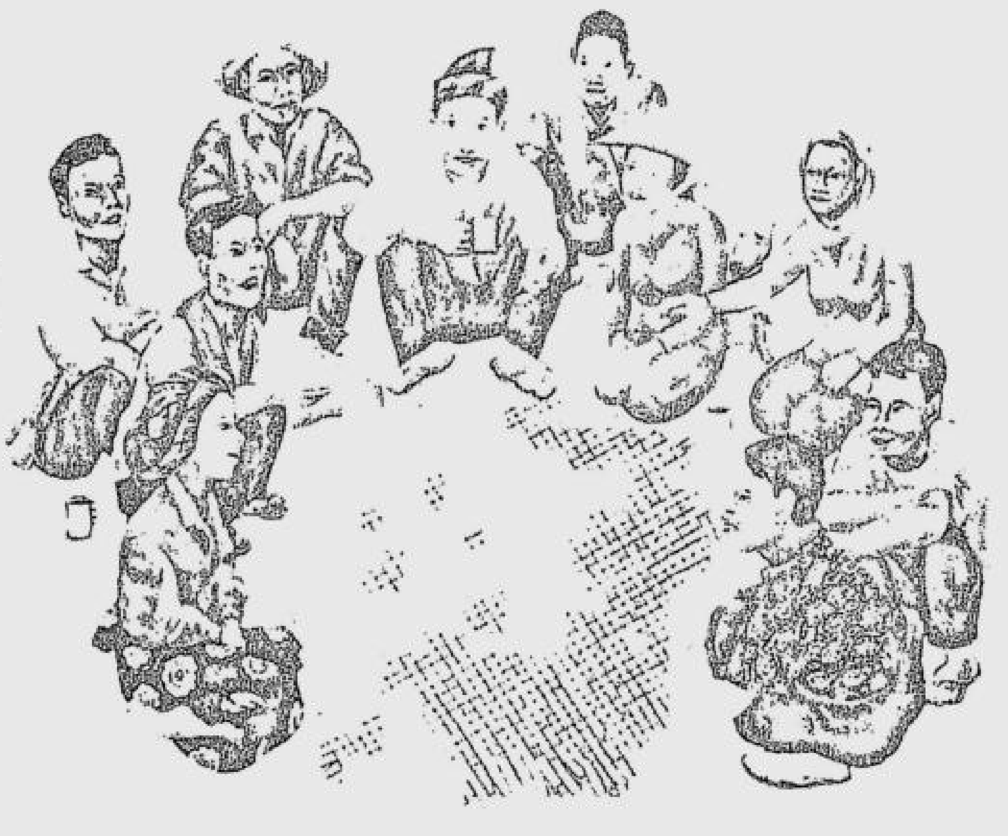

2nd ASEAN Civil Society Conference

10-12 December 2006
Montebello Villa Hotel
Cebu City, Philippines

WE are participants of the 2nd Asean Civil Society Conference in Cebu, Philippines from December 10-12, 2006 and national CSO members of the regional organizations of the Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) who have engaged the Eminent Persons Group on the Asean Charter in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia (April), Singapore (June) and Manila, Philippines (November); and facilitated seven national consultations for the Philippines (October), Malaysia (October), Thailand (October), Cambodia (October), Burma (October), Indonesia (November) and Vietnam (November).

We enumerate below the key points we would like to see enshrined in the ASEAN Charter:

1. Regional Recognition of Human Rights and Human Dignity as Foundation of Community

The ASEAN Charter should explicitly recognize all core human rights including recently signed international agreements that expand on human rights norms and standards.

2. Introducing Human Security

The ASEAN Charter should broadly define human security, allocate a specific chapter addressing the issue, and contain provisions that will lead to the implementation of its values.

3. Regional Harmonization and Complementation in Industry, Agriculture and Services

The ASEAN Charter should enshrine principles that: recognize a policy mix; integrate a strong social protection element in economic development; enshrine the values of agrarian reform, justice, and food sovereignty; move away from economic activities based largely on natural resource extraction; promote economic growth anchored in and driven by rural industrialization; promote appropriate sustainable industrial development; and promote public investment through regional support mechanisms.

4. Sustainable Production and Consumption, Energy and Development

The ASEAN Charter should: enshrine the principle of sustainable development; adopt the principle of sustainable food, water and agricultural system at the local and national levels; envision an industrial production system that is clean, resource- and energy-efficient and sustainable; establish mechanisms for the promotion of renewable energy sources; and promote sustainable consumption.

5. Environmental Sustainability

The ASEAN Charter should promote the concept of development that is sustainable and therefore within the carrying capacity of ASEAN ecosystems and must not destroy cultures and the rights of communities to their resources.

6. Institutional Mechanisms for Responsive Regionalism

ASEAN should be an institution that recognizes universally-accepted rights and standards, including core labor standards, and provides mechanisms for monitoring and securing compliance at the national and regional levels. In the area of human rights, the ASEAN Charter should mandate the immediate creation of a regional human rights body responsible for, among others: monitoring and reporting human rights conditions within the region; investigating human rights violations; developing awareness on human rights among people in the region; and, providing effective compliance and redress mechanisms.

The ASEAN Charter should incorporate mandatory social dialogue and consultation with civil society, workers organizations and social movements, to ensure their access to decision making processes at all levels, and guarantee their full participation in economic, social, cultural and political life. Specifically, the ASEAN Charter should institutionalize the ASEAN Civil Society Conference that provides an open and accountable space for civil society to dialogue with ASEAN, even as civil society continues to pursue various tracks of engagement and employs a range of actions.

7. Securing a Process for the ASEAN Charter

On the issue of drafting the ASEAN Charter, we reiterate our call for broad-based consultations at the regional and national level, after the EPG process would have been completed.

We strongly recommend that the EPG put forward a proposed process for the ASEAN Charter through referendum in all Member States. This is to ensure that the ASEAN Charter is made known to all ASEAN citizens, and that they are given the direct hand in determining the future of ASEAN.

The Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacies (SAPA) Working Group on the ASEAN
Contact persons: Joy Chavez - Focus on the Global South • Alex Chandra - Institute for Global Justice • Marissa de Guzman - South East Asian Committee for Advocacy
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"We encourage everyone to join us at the People's Week of Action in Cebu City during the 12th ASEAN Summit. Let more voices be heard in faith that more, too, will listen."

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

UK treating spy poisoning as murder

LONDON—BRITISH POLICE SAID ON WEDNESDAY they were now treating the death of poisoned former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko as murder, raising the stakes in an investigation that has extended from London to Moscow.

"Detectives investigating the death of Alexander Litvinenko have reached the stage where it is felt appropriate to treat it as an allegation of murder," London police said in a statement.

Britain's embassy in Moscow also announced small traces of radiation had been found on its premises, but said they were too small to be harmful and declined to say if the radiation was polonium 210—the poison found in Litvinenko's body.

Litvinenko, a fierce critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin, began complaining of feeling ill on Nov. 1. He died in London three weeks later from radiation poisoning.

The former KGB agent accused Putin of ordering his assassination. Russia denies any involvement, but the case has revived diplomatic tensions between London and Moscow.

British police, who sent a team to Moscow to question witnesses who met Litvinenko in London, said detectives were keeping an open mind and following the evidence. They had previously said they treated his death as suspicious.

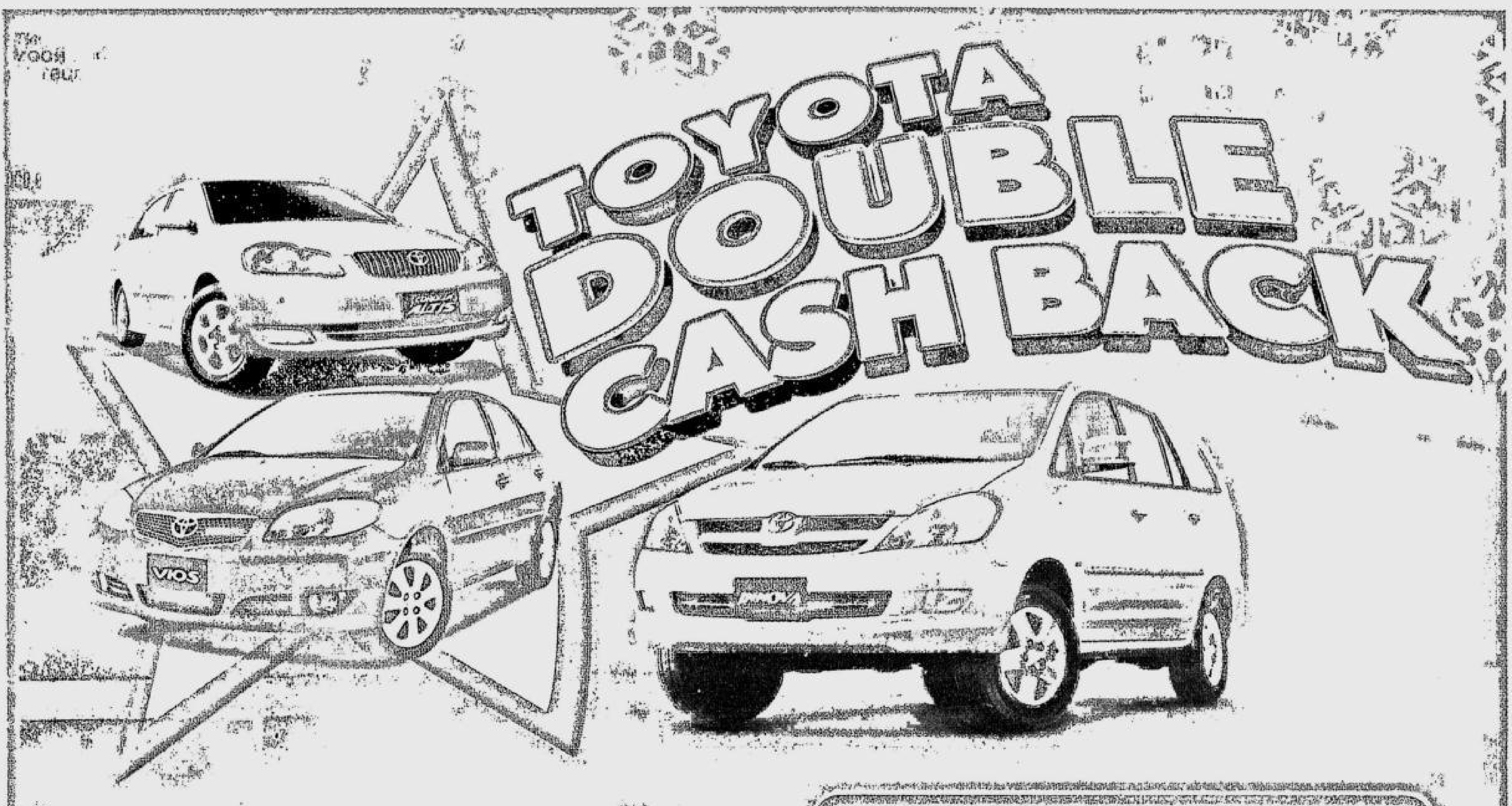
"It is important to stress that we have reached no conclusions as to the means employed, the motive or the identity of those who might be responsible for Mr. Litvinenko's death," the police statement added.

In Moscow, British police and investigators from Russian Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika's office on Wednesday questioned Dmitry Kovtun, one of at least two Russians who met the ex-spy the day he fell ill.

Investigators met Kovtun in the same hospital where ex-KGB agent Andrei Lugovoy, a high-profile figure in the affair, was being treated, apparently for radiation poisoning.

While admitting to meeting Litvinenko in a London hotel on Nov. 1, Lugovoy has denied any involvement in his death.

The small group of British detectives who arrived in Moscow on Monday were virtually relegated to the role of observers by chief prosecutor Chaika who has publicly insisted Russian authorities will direct interviews on Russian soil. *Reuters*



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Payla sure of bronze

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006

PAYLA: Saves RP day.

By Ted S. Melendres
Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—FLYWEIGHT VIOLITO PAYLA became the first Filipino to ensure that the Philippine delegation does not go home empty handed when he stopped his Indian foe in the quarterfinals of the boxing competition in the 15th Asian Games at the Aspire 5 Hall here yesterday.

The victory, coming in 1 minute 23 seconds of the third round via RSC-Os (referee stop contest-outscored), meant a sure bronze medal for Payla, who advanced to the semifinals of his tough division.

Payla came out of his corner in the first round bristling with combinations as he completely took the fight out of the less experienced Jitender Kumar of India.

The 27-year-old Army enlisted man from Cagayan de Oro City cornered the first two rounds, 11-2 and 7-1, before delivering the coup de grace in the third—a left straight to the top of the head and a right hook that caught the Indian in the kisser. He was leading 27-7 when the fight was stopped.

Payla next takes on China's Yang Bo in the Final 4 for a chance to vie for at least the silver medal in the weight class where Thailand's flashy defending champion Somjit Jongjohor looms large.

Yang ruined the form charts when he upset the co-favorite, South Korea's Lee Ok-sung, 41-21, in a wild and woolly encounter. Both fighters attacked with abandon but it was Yang who impressed the judges more than the Korean, who did not win a single round.

Jongjohor, the gold medalist in the 2002 Busan Asiad, overcame Kazakhstan's Mirat Sarsembayev, 20-11, and will collide with Japan's Katsuaki Susa, the winner via RSC-Os, exactly one minute into the second round, over Sri Lanka's

PAYLA/ A32

As of Dec 07, 2006; 6:00 p.m.

Nation	G	S	B	Total
China	76	41	18	135
Japan	22	24	33	79
South Korea	15	22	41	78
Kazakhstan	10	8	18	36
North Korea	4	6	9	19
Thailand	3	7	6	16
India	3	5	6	14
Malaysia	2	4	2	8
Hong Kong	2	3	4	9
Mongolia	2	3	2	7
Taiwan	2	1	8	11
Uzbekistan	2	0	5	7
Kuwait	2	0	1	3
Syria	2	0	0	2
Iran	1	5	1	7
Singapore	1	3	5	9
Vietnam	1	3	3	7
Indonesia	1	1	2	4
Saudi Arabia	1	0	1	2
Qatar	0	3	4	7
Myanmar	0	2	2	4
Iraq	0	1	1	2
UAE	0	1	1	2
Krygyzstan	0	1	0	1
Pakistan	0	1	0	1
Turkmenistan	0	1	0	1
Bangladesh	0	0	1	1
Lebanon	0	0	1	1

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Payla sure of bronze

From page A31

Chamila Prasad Abeyrathna.

But another Filipino, featherweight Anthony Marcial, ran smack into the experienced fists of Kazakhstan's Galib Jafarov and bowed out of the competition, 27-12.

Finweight John Paul Lizardo opened the Filipinos' bid in taekwondo with a resounding 7-0 victory over Wahid Bim Azim of Bangladesh in the round of 16 at the indoor hall of the Qatar Sports Club.

Lizardo's flashy win cushioned the impact of compatriot Donald Geisler's defeat to Thailand's Patiwat Thongsalap, 3-6, in the round of eight of the 72 kg division.

Too late

The Filipino lost the first two rounds by scores of 1-2 and 0-2 and by the time he scored consecutively in the third, it was too late.

Geisler, an Athens Olympian, looked to be favoring an old injury that forced him to miss training for several months prior to the Asian Games, said an official of the national taekwondo association.

Antonio Gabica got going in the 8-ball singles in billiards with a resounding 9-1 win over Mongolia's Gundsambuu Baatarchuluun.

A medal eluded the bowlers again in the trios Wednesday night as the RP Team 1 of Markwin Tee, CJ Suarez and Biboy Rivera settled for sixth place with 3819 pinfalls, 52 pins behind the bronze medal-winning triumvirate from Saudi Arabia.

The RP Team 2 of Paeng Nepomuceno, Tyrone Ongpauco and Chester King wound up 14th in the 37-team event with 3734.

Earlier, the trio of Liza del Rosario, Marianne Daisy Posadas and Jojo Canare finished seventh in the women's event with 3664.

In chess, International Master Darwin Laylo escaped with a draw against Grandmaster Dao Thien Hai and the Filipinos bowed to the Vietnamese, 0.5-2.5, in the mixed team event.

GM-candidate Roland Dableo lost a drawish game against GM Nguyen Anh Dung and teenage revelation Jedara Docena gave away positional and material advantages in absorbing a defeat at the hands of Woman GM Nguyen Thi Thanh An.

Paul Brian Rosario was the best-placed Filipino in men's skeet with a score of 64 on strings of 21-22-22. He stood 11 birds off the pace set by China's Qu Ridong, in the 39-shooter field.

Patricio Bernardo scored 63 and lay in 34th place while Darius Alexis Hizon managed only a 59 and was dead last.

Rapid fire

Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, who settled for 17th place in the rapid fire Wednesday, was a no-show in the 25m standard pistol competition won by India's Jaspal Rana.

The swimmers continued to struggle at the Hamad Aquatic Center.

Fil-American Erica Totten topped the first of four heats of the women's 50m butterfly in 30.87 seconds but failed to rank among the eight finalists.

Miguel Molina landed third in his heat in the 200 breaststroke, Ryan Arabejo finished seventh (28.69) in his heat of the 50m backstroke, Gerard Bordado wound up fifth in his heat of the 200m breaststroke, Marichi Gandionco ended up sixth in a field of seven (31.50) in the 50m butterfly and the quartet of Molina, Bordado, James Walsh and Kendrick Uy settled for fourth place in their heat of the 4x100m medley relay and advanced with the slowest time among the finalists.

Shut out of the medals in rowing, the Filipinos managed a seventh place ranking in the men's single sculls through Jose Rodriguez (4:00.29) and an eighth place in the lightweight single sculls through Nilo Cordova (4:08.56).

The 20-year-old Marcial took only the second round, 7-5, against the 2003 world featherweight champion, who was clearly the superior fighter in the well-applauded fight.

"Jafarov showed he was the better fighter," said Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines. "We knew that Anthony had a tough match because the Kazakh enjoyed an edge in experience."

The Filipino started cold and trailed Jafarov, 1-6, after the first round. After backing up the Kazakh with a series of left-rights in the second, Marcial was stung with two right straights and lost the third, 2-5. Jafarov won the last round, 11-2.

MIGUEL Molina powers through the water in heat 2 of the men's 200m breaststroke swimming event. He finished in third place and qualified for the final. AFP

Track bets goal: beat SEAG foes

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—IT'S A FORMIDABLE PROPOSITION. And understandably, not one member of the track and field team has come forward to so say he'll give it a try.

Living up to his controversial nature, national athletics chief Go Teng Kok is dangling his expensive Rolex watch to anyone who can win a gold medal in the centerpiece competition of the 15th Asian Games that starts today at Khalifa Stadium.

The tall odds Filipino bidders face in track and field may have prompted Go to make that incredible offer, said an RP delegation official who asked not to be named.

"Like the swimmers, the athletics team is hard-pressed to win a medal in this world-class Games," he said. "I guess Mr. Go also knows that his athletes need to get through the eye of the needle to win a gold here. Bronze *lang baka mahirapan na.*"

Go's 11-member squad is pinning its hopes on long jumpers Henry Dagmil, Maristella Torres and Lerma Bulauitan-Gabito to end the country's long Asiad medal drought in track and field, according to jumping coach Joseph Sy.

Interestingly, it was also in long jump where the Philippines won its last athletics medal. The retired Elma Muros-Posadas nailed the bronze in the 1998 edition of the quadrennial meet in Bangkok.

The California-trained Dagmil leapt to 8.0 meters in the United States, according to Go. If that is accurate, Dagmil surpassed the record 7.81m he posted on the way to the gold medal in last year's Southeast Asian Games in Manila.

Dagmil himself boasts a personal-best 7.83, almost a third of a meter shorter than the 8.14m Asiad record set in the 2002 Busan Games by Saudi Arabia's Hussein Taher Al-Sabee.

"We look forward to the performances of our jumpers," said Sy. "Henry refined his techniques in the United States and has indeed improved a lot."

But the RP cause in the women's event will need a healthy Torres and a focused Gabito.

Torres, long considered the heir to the throne of Muros-Posadas, has not fully recovered from a mild fracture in a leg bone and is expected to play second fiddle to Gabito who, according to Sy, is in top form.

Sy said Gabito needs to keep improving after the first leap—where a jumper usually posts her longest distance—to have a chance at a medal.

"The field here is very tough, and you can't take the Middle Eastern athletes lightly," he said. "*Basta huwag lang tayo matalo sa mga* Thais, Indonesians, Malaysians *at* Singaporeans, *okay na.*"

Dagmil will be joined in the runway today by Joebert Delicano.

The veteran Ernie Candelario is entered in the 400 meters along with Julius Nierras while SEA Games gold medalist Rene Herrera competes in the 3,000m steeplechase.

Eduardo Buenavista vies in the men's marathon which will be disputed on Dec. 10, the first time that the event will not be run to close the Games competitions on the final day.

2 boxers eye bronze today

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—THE CENTERpiece athletics competition finally gets under way today with six Filipinos vying in four events at the majestic Khalifa Stadium, even as two more boxers fight for semifinal berths—and sure medals—in the 15th Asian Games here.

United States-trained Henry Dagmil and Asiad first-timer Joebert Delicano open up first for the 11-man athletics squad when they compete in the men's long jump starting at 9:20 a.m.

Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Arniel Ferrera follows the jumpers into the 40,000-seat stadium when he vies in the hammer throw late in the afternoon.

Ernie Candelario and Julius Nierras, protégés of former Asiad silver medalist and RP coach Isidro del Prado, take on world-class opposition when they see action in the heats of the 400 meters before Rene Herrera closes the Filipinos' account for the day in the 3,000m steeplechase.

Light flyweight Godfrey Castro and bantamweight Joan Tipon climb into the ring in the afternoon both praying for one more victory that will assure them of at least a bronze medal in their respective categories.

"This will be a fight to the death," Tipon said in Filipino on the eve of his fight against Kim Won-guk of North Korea, the 25-year-old 5-foot-9 fighter who reached the quarterfinals of the Athens Olympics.

The 21-year-old Castro tries to get out of the shadow of the suspended Harry Tañamor when he battles Saudi Arabia's Ali Saad Al Ahmry, who failed to impress RP scouts in his victory against a fighter from Timor Leste.

"*Importante na makauna agad sa taga-Saudi* (The key is to get ahead of the Saudi fighter)," said Castro. "*Kapag alam mo na ang kalibre, gagapangin na ang puntos* (When you have measured him, the points will follow)."

The golfers also make their debut with the men's team of Marvin Dumandan, Jay Bayron, Michael Bibat and Gene Bondoc and the women's squad of Anya Tanpinco, Dottie Ardina and Cyna Marie Rodriguez teeing off in the first round of the team and individual play at the posh Qatar Golf Club.

Getting the door early in the snooker and English billiard competitions, Antonio Gabica and Leonardo Andam set out as among the favorites this time in the 8-ball event in the morning. Rubilen Amit and Mary Ann Basas join the fray in the women's 8-ball qualifying session.

Sailing action resumes at the Doha Sailing Club with Southeast Asian Games champion German Paz competing in races 6 and 7 of the mistral lights and Reneric Moreno seeking qualification in the mistral heavies. Ridgely Balladares and Rommel Chavez take to the water later in races 5 and 6 of the 470 event.

The Philippine squad joins sepak takraw action at the Khalifa Tennis and Squash Complex as the women take on the Thais in the regu, while shooters Patricio Bernardo and Paul Brian Rosario compete in the skeet qualification round at the Lusail Shooting Range.

Korean rider dies in freak accident

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—THE ALARM IN the shrieks of the Filipina volunteers in orange track suits was disconcerting.

A horse balked in front of a hurdle and the equestrian rider tipped violently over. As he fell into the muddy track, his mount somersaulted nose first at the bottom of the hurdle and landed on the rider's head and chest.

The accident in yesterday's rain-drenched equestrian individual cross-country race claimed the life of the veteran Kim Hyung-chil of South Korea and brought a pall of gloom to the competitions here.

The 47-year-old Kim, who won the cross-country silver medal in the 2002 Busan Asian Games, was revived after 10 minutes but died while being rushed to a nearby hospital. Listed as cause of death was cardiac arrest.

"It is with great sadness that the Doha Asian Games Organizing Committee announces the death of an athlete who was participating in equestrian's individual cross-country race this morning," a Games advisory said.

The women volunteers—Deyna Velasquez, 32, of Calumpit, Bulacan, and Girlie Vilegas, 30, of Montalban, Rizal—were watching the event on a large television screen at the Main Media Center when the accident happened.

"*Naku, anong nangyari, nadaganan no'ng kabayo 'yung atleta* (The horse fell onto the athlete)!" a startled Velasquez, who was tending the needs of sportswriters at the main Media Center, said.

Kim belonged to an equestrian family and finished 10th in the 2004 Athens Olympics. His father competed in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

RP DAILY SKED—Dec. 8

ATHLETICS—*9:20 a.m.*—Men's long jump (Henry Dagmil, Joebert Delicano); *5:20 p.m.*—Men's hammer throw(Arniel Ferrera); *7:23 p.m.*—400-meter run (Ernie Candelario, Julius Nierras); *8 p.m.*—3,000-meter steeplechase (Rene Herrera)

Boxing—*Starting at 2 p.m.*—Godfrey Castro vs Ali Saad Al Ahmry (light fly); Joan Tipon vs Kim Won Guk (bantam)

Cue Sports—*Starting at 10 a.m.*—Women's 8-Ball (Rubilen Amit, Mary Ann Basas); Men's 8-Ball (Antonio Gabica, Leonardo Andam)

Equestrian—*Starting at 9 a.m.*—Jumping individual and team event

Golf—Men's (Marvin Dumandan, Jay Bayron, Michael Bibat, Gene Bondoc); Women's (Anya Tanpinco, Dottie Ardina, Cyna Marie Rodriguez)

Sailing—*Starting at 11 a.m.*—Mistral Light Race 6 and 7 (German Paz); Mistral Heavy Race 6 and 7 (Reneric Moreno); 470 Race Men 5 and 6 (Ridgely Balladare, Rommel Chavez)

Sepak Takraw—*9 a.m.*—Women's regu (RP vs Thailand)

Shooting—*3 p.m.*—Men's skeet (Patricio Bernardo)

Bitbit takes spill at sleek velodrome

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—CYCLIST MARITES BITbit escaped with superficial injuries and a sore thigh after she lost control during a practice session on Wednesday at the sleek velodrome of the Aspire Hall 1, venue of the track cycling competitions of the 15th Asian Games here.

Games medical volunteers were quick to provide first aid treatment to Bitbit, the country's lone entry in women's cycling events. She sustained bruises on her left arm and gashes on both legs.

Filipino coaches, led by former Asian Gamer Jommel Lorenzo, heaved a sigh of relief when doctors gave Bitbit the go-signal to ride again today.

Another Filipino rider, Arnold Marcelo, who will compete in the "tag team" event called madison, also slipped and fell as he rounded the high-speed 40-degree portion of the collapsible velodrome where Bitbit also crashed.

Marcelo sustained minor bruises in the arms.

"*Madulas at grabe ang anggulo sa paliko* (The bends were slippery and acutely angled)," said Lorenzo.

Because the Olympic-regulation Aspire track venue is only 250 meters long—a good 150 meters shorter than the Philippines' only velodrome at Amoranto Stadium in Quezon City—the top of the bends are steeper and more treacherous.

Bitbit, the 29-year-old Southeast Asian Games gold medalist in the mountain bike event, still has time to recover from her wounds. She competes in her first track event Saturday in the 500-meter time trial final.

The rider from Toledo City finished seventh in the road individual time trial event on Wednesday and was among the 16 riders who wound up with the same clocking as the bronze medalist from Japan in the road race on Tuesday.

The cyclists have not delivered on a promised medal as of Wednesday.

Former Marlboro Tour champion Arnel Quirimit clocked one hour, one minute and 36.35 seconds in the 44.8-kilometer men's individual time trial won by professional Chinese rider Song Baoqing in 55:33.35 minutes. Kyrgyzstan's Evgeny Vakker took the silver in 56.16.83 and Kazakhstan's Andrey Mizurov the bronze in 56:51.92.

Bitbit timed 35.21.98 minutes in the 23.8-km women's race topped by another Chinese, Li Meifang in 31:17.85. Kazakhstan's Zulfiya Zabirova clinched the silver in 32:10.24 and South Korea's Lee Min-hye the bronze in 33:37.57.

"The Chinese are all professionals and tough to beat," said Lorenzo.

MARITES BITBIT: Lucky to escape injury.

Barako tackle Express sans Guiao today

By Musong R. Castillo

ANTIPOLO—RED BULL, WITHOUT A head coach and all, tries to become the first team in the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup to win 11 games when the Barako clash with Air21 today at the Ynares Center here.

Red Bull is bidding for an automatic slot in the final four like Purefoods and Sta. Lucia which will tangle in the 7:20 p.m. contest.

The Barako will play minus Yeng Guiao in their 4:35 p.m. collision with the Express, and judging from the way Red Bull played on Wednesday night against Welcoat, it seemed that its players are up to the task.

GAMES TODAY
(Ynares Center)
4:35 p.m.—Air21 vs Red Bull
7:20 p.m.—Purefoods vs Sta. Lucia

Guiao is serving a two-game suspension meted by Commissioner Noli Eala for his altercation with Talk 'N Text team manager Frankie Lim in Tacloban last week.

Defending champion Purefoods, on the other hand, will be tangling with a side that has lost its last two games and is not leading or holding a piece of the tournament lead for the first time.

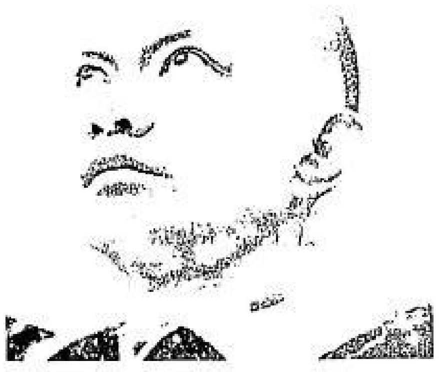
"With two straight losses, I am sure they (Realtors) are extra motivated," Chunkee Giants coach Ryan Gregorio said. "We will come into the game with the mind-set that we are badly in need of a victory to bolster our (outright semifinal) chances."

Right now, Red Bull is just half-a-game behind league-leading Barangay Ginebra's 10-4 card, the Realtors and San Miguel are a full game off at 9-5, while the Giants are in solo fifth with an 8-6 mark.

Only the top two teams will advance to the Final Four outright, which would mean a rest of more than two weeks.

Talk 'N Text, meanwhile, is at 8-7 and is tugging at the coattails of the Giants and a Purefoods loss tonight would open the door for the Phone Pals to make the quarterfinals outright while shoving Purefoods down to the wild-card phase.

"The ultimate goal is top 2, not just the top 5," Gregorio added. The important thing is we still have a shot and our fate is within our control.



GUIAO

DOUG Kramer of Cebuana Lhuillier shoots over Nurjanjam Alfad of Sista. ERIK ARAZAS

Sista whips C. Lhuillier

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE SISTA SUPER SEALERS HARDLY NEEDED THE SERVICES OF A returning big man in notching a 77-69 victory over the Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala Moneymen in the PBL Silver Cup yesterday at the Olivarez College Sports Center in Parañaque.

A scoring tear anchored on Marcy Arellano in the second half allowed the Sealers to claim solo second at 4-2.

Gilbert Malabanan, Khiel Misa and Kelvin Gregorio also shone in the final canto to brush off the Moneymen's last-ditch effort.

"We cannot rely on just our shooters, so I told them to take it to the basket," said Sista coach Caloy Garcia

Arellano topscored with 18 points, while Malabanan tallied 13 markers, 13 boards and four assists.

The 6-foot-9 Samigue Eman, out for a month due to health reasons, finished with three points, six rebounds and two blocks in 11 minutes of action.

In the second game, the TeleTech Titans survived the Magnolia Spinners' late rally for a 76-70 triumph.

Al Magpayo drilled in 18 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to power the Titans' climb to third place.

"We're starting to jell," noted coach Jerry Codiñera after his Titans joined Mail and More at 3-2.

Charging behind Doug Kramer, the Moneymen threatened at 68-63 before Gregorio responded with a trey for a 71-63 edge with 1:23 left.

The Moneymen skidded to their second straight loss in a 2-3 card while the Spinners fell to 1-4.

The scores:

First Game

SISTA 77—Arellano 18, Bonus 13, Malabanan 13, Misa 11, Gregorio 7, Saldua 5, Bauzon 3, Eman 3, Alfad 2, Ebuen 0, Robles 0, Pinera 0.

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 69—Kramer 20, Bono 19, Escalona 11, Dela Cuesta 8, Dulay 6, Uy 2, Buyco 2, Viardo 1, Abadia 0, Oreta 0, Gonzales 0, Tagupa 0, Yee 0, Santos 0, Mendoza 0.

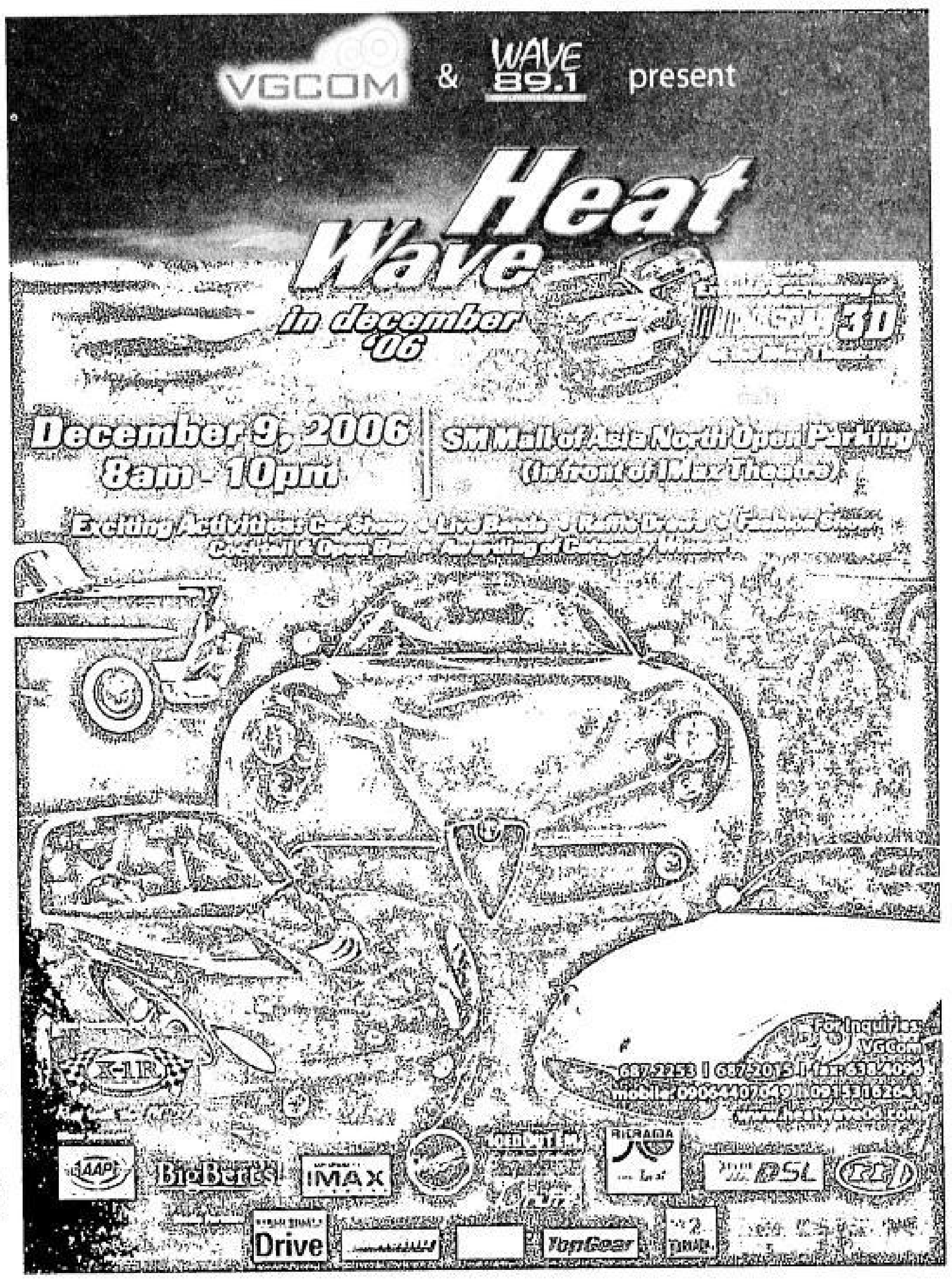
Quarters: 19-18, 35-35, 57-54

Second Game

TELETECH 76—Magpayo 18, Grijaldo 12, Capus 12, Mercado 9, Tan 7, Valenzuela 4, Guerrero 4, Concha 4, Estrada 2, Labagala 2, Villamin 2, Doruelo 0.

MAGNOLIA 70—Gamalinda 12, Menor 10, Aljamal 10, Ekwe 9, Custodio 9, Villanueva 8, Chan 5, Taganas 4, Escobal 3, Angeles 0, Tecson 0.

Quarters: 17-17, 40-32, 61-52, 76-70



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SPORTSWATCH

Del Monte 4- cocker stakes P.4M

NO LESS THAN P400,000 IN GUARANTEED PRIZE AWAITS THE CHAMPIONS IN a 4-cock derby at Del Monte Cockpit Arena (Potrero, Malabon) on Jan. 5. The DMCA management announced yesterday that the event's new hosts are Amboy Ng and Sam Mendoza. The former host, Carding Ng (Amboy's father), passed away last Tuesday. His remains lie in state at Rommel Ng Sanctuarium on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Amboy said proceeds of the derby will be donated to a charitable institution, a request made by his father before passing away. Call 361-2773.

Cavite 7-cock derby finals today

ALL ROADS LEAD TO THE CAVITE COLISEUM DERBY CENTER AND CASINO (Km 18, Bacoor, Cavite) today as the championship round of Cavite 7–Cock International Derby gets under way at 6 p.m. with 70 fights on tap. After two days of competition, only two entries remained unbeaten with four wins each: Binangonan Balbina of Gov. Ito Ynares and Sam Cainta Coliseum Dec. 21 of Bobbit Pies. Also in contention for the title are the entries of Manny Pacquiao, Bebot Uy of Davao, Rey Castaneda, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano, Pepito Ngo, Pabling Ballelos, William Co and Lito Orillaza. The event stakes a guaranteed prize of P2 million. The champion will also receive a giant trophy from the hosts, former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr., lawyer Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza and William Co. For info, call (046) – 9709971; (046)–9704810 or 0915–5742399 (Ferdie Bautista).

SJC 4-cock derby set Monday

MORE THAN 35 COCKERS OF METRO MANILA WILL COMPETE ON MONDAY IN San Juan Coliseum's super 4-cock derby with P300,000 in guaranteed prize at stake. Host Johnny Yu will be assisted by the SJC management and Louie Cua. Entry fee and minimum bet are P11,000 and P5,500, respectively. Meanwhile, SJC's Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan starts at 9 a.m. today with more than 60 fights lined up. According to hosts Ame and Renato Shio, the winners will receive a guaranteed prize of P100,000 for an entry fee of P1,100. Call 725-5369 and 725-6563.

12 teams join NBC's next conference

TWELVE TEAMS HAVE ALREADY CONFIRMED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE National Basketball Conference's next season set to start on Feb. 24, 2007 at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City. NBC secretary general Tito Palma said the league has tapped the services of Waffle Marketing Inc. as it gets bigger and stronger going into its fourth year. Palma finalized details of NBC's agreement with Waffle Marketing, which specializes in sports marketing. Waffle marketing was represented by Auty Villarama, and marketing coordinator Peeya delos Reyes. Jojo Labella of Genebell Productions was also present. Genebell is set to handle the league's TV production. "I believe in picking the fruit at the right time," said Villarama, who was Nike Sports marketing manager before setting up his own company. "The league has earned respect and made a name the past three years. Now it's ready to bear fruit." Palma believes that with the right marketing, the league will grow further and fully realize its vision. "We're a basketball crazy nation. We attract thousands of fans whenever we play in the provinces."

WAFFLE marketing coordinator Peeya delos Reyes, Waffle president Auty Villarama, NBC's Tito Palma and Genebell Productions' Jojo Labella (from left) after the contract signing.

Poker grand finals slated

WITH BARELY A week to go before the grand finals of the Philippine Poker Tour (PPT) Million-Peso Hold'em Philippine Championship, poker enthusiasts are scrambling for available seats through the remaining satellite/qualifying tournaments.

These are being held at the Elbow Room at Metro-Walk, Pasig (every Tuesday and Thursday), San Mig at Alabang Town Center (every Wednesday and Friday), and at Valle Verde Country Club, Pasig (every Wednesday and Friday). Casino Filipino Pavilion-Manila will hold its last qualifying competition tomorrow with registration starting 12:30 p.m. and tournament proper at 2 p.m.

Nonoy Tirol's Rajah Hotel in Cebu City is also expected to wind up its satellite schedule this weekend.

With guaranteed prizes amounting to P3 million, the PPT Million-Peso Hold'em Philippine Championship is the biggest non-wager poker skills competition to date.

Those interested to join these qualifying tournaments may call the PPT Secretariat (Cindy) at 817-9092 or 812-0153.

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Thais erupt with joy as sepak team snares title

BANGKOK—THAILAND CELEBRATED ON Thursday after its men's sepak takraw team took the Asian Games gold medal away from archrival Malaysia, drowning out disappointment at its women's loss to dark-horse Vietnam.

Thai women's coach Chucheep Kongmeechon said he was so disappointed to lose to underdog Vietnam in a thrilling final he might resign.

But the victory by the squad of 12 men, which the Daily News said would bring each 1 million baht ($28,000) from a government sports fund, was the main focus.

"Men's team break Yellow Tigers necks," the Daily News tabloid-styled daily screamed in a front-page headline over a photograph of the team leaping and bouncing to a third straight Asian Games gold.

The victory in Doha was also especially sweet for coming over Malaysia, which, like Thailand, claims to have invented the ancient Southeast Asia sport which made its Asian Games debut in 1990.

They have contested every final of a game much like volleyball but played with a synthetic rattan ball with feet and head.

Amid the joy, there was sympathy for the defeated women's team.

"Broken Hearted Takraw Team Lose to Vietnamese Women," the Kom Chad Luek (Sharp, Clear, Deep) newspaper said.

Underdog Vietnam's defeat of the traditional Thai powerhouse produced its first gold medal of the Asian Games.

It took the Vietnamese four hours of a thrilling final to eke out a remarkable victory against the red-hot favorites and defending champions at the Al-Sadd Sports Club.

"We might not be as proficient in our skills, but the girls do have a big heart," overjoyed Vietnam coach Tung Lap Ha said.

Thai coach Chucheep Kongmeechon could not agree more. Chucheep apologized to the nation and said he was considering quitting, the Daily News reported. *Reuters*

Paradorn quits due to injury

DOHA—THAILAND'S PARADORN Srichaphan pulled out of the Asian Games singles event on Wednesday saying he wanted to rest his injured wrist for the Australian Open in January.

"I've pulled out of the singles, because the Australian Open is more important for me," the defending Asian Games champion said.

Paradorn was speaking after losing to Japan's Go Soeda 7-6, 0-6, 4-6 in the semifinals of the men's team competition.

"I can't push myself too hard because of my wrist. I wasn't in fine shape. I was completely out of my game and he (Soeda) played well," the Thai star said.

Thailand was later bundled out of the team competition with defending champions Japan winning the third and crucial match in the doubles.

Japan's Satoshi Iwabuchi and Takao Suzuki proved too strong for identical twins Ratiwatana Sanchai and Ratiwatana Sonchat, winning 6-3, 7-6. Thailand's Danai Udomchoke earlier saw off Satoshi Iwabuchi, 6-4, 6-7, 6-2, in the first rubber.

Japan now face South Korea in the finals Thursday after the Asian Games silver medalists defeated surprise package Taiwan.

Taiwan took the first rubber in the semifinal showdown, Wang Yeu Tzuoo defeating Jun Woong Sun in straight sets in 75 minutes.

Lee Hyung Taik squared the tie, downing Taiwan's Lu Yen Hsun, 6-4, 6-2, before combining with Jun to defeat Lu and Wang.

Taiwan had earlier upset India, which boast multiple doubles Grand Slam winners Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi.

India will battle Asian Games bronze medallists Taiwan for the women's team title also on Thursday. *AFP*

DOHA 2006
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MALAYSIA'S Abd Ghani Mohd Futra tries to block a shot from Thailand's Somsakul Singha during the sepak takraw men's team finals. Thailand won, 2-0. AP

Chinese juggernaut crushes Asiad rivals

DOHA—YANG WEI GRABBED HIS eighth gold to join Li Ning as the most successful gymnast in Asian Games history as the Qatari capital continued to ring to the sound of the Chinese national anthem on Wednesday.

"March of the Volunteers" was played 15 times on day five in Doha and China increased their golden haul to 76, more than half their tally from Pusan 2002 with two-thirds of the Games still remaining.

Yang, taking part in his third Games, shared gold with South Korea's Kim Dae-eun in the parallel bars to match the mark set by compatriot Li, China's "Athlete of the 20th Century."

The medal, Yang's fourth of these Games, was also a record-equalling 11th overall, although Li won one more silver.

"It's finally over," Yang told China's Xinhua news agency.

"Now I just want to have a good sleep. A holiday is even better." Zhang Nan overcame an unsteady routine to take gold in the women's beam final, claiming a historic 100th gold medal in artistic gymnastics for China at the Games.

Superheavyweight weightlifter Mu Shuangshuang snatched a world record 139kgs—kgs more than her bodyweight —on the way to grabbing China's 10th weightlifting gold in Doha, pipping the previous mark held by South Korea's Jang Mi-ran by 1kg.

"This time I did it," said Mu, who tied with Jang at the last two world championships but lost gold because of her heavier weight. "And now that I have, I'm going to keep doing it forever." "Iranian Hercules" Hossein Rezazadeh then closed the weightlifting competition with a majestic display to claim his third consecutive superheavy title.

In the pool, China's reigning champion Chen Zuo shattered his own Asian record by more than half a second in the men's 100m freestyle.

After a series of scathing attacks by their coach, China responded by winning the first three of Wednesday's finals, two of them with one-two finishes.

Xu Yanwei won the women's 100m freestyle in 55.02 then said the team had been unhappy with their performances and had been instructed to go out and make ends.

Vietnam won their first gold by beating sepak takraw powerhouse Thailand in a thrilling four-hour women's team final of a sport where players kick and head a rattan ball over a net.

The most passionate crowd of the day was at the final of the kabaddi where India beat Pakistan, 35-23, to retain their title in the sport which looks like a game of playground tag played out on a netball court.

Kazakhstan continued to prosper, picking up its ninth and 10th titles with victories in the men's cycling team time trial and men's 10-meter running target team shooting event.

Andrey Mizurov, who also won the Asian Games team time trial 12 years ago in Hiroshima, said the cycling title would be a boost to the sport in the former Soviet state.

Japan picked five titles to stay at second on the medals table with 22 golds, seven better than South Korea. *Reuters*

Nokors show Japan booters door; Chinese enter q'finals

DOHA—FOOTBALL POWERHOUSE JAPAN crashed out of the Asian Games on Wednesday when they were beaten 2-1 by archrivals North Korea while China beat Oman, 2-1, in a match which saw two red cards and three penalties.

North Korea top Group F with seven points and will face South Korea in the quarterfinals.

Japan finished with six points but has an inferior goal difference and was thwarted in its hopes of making the last eight as a best runner-up.

The North Koreans were ahead as early as the fourth minute when skipper Hong Yong Jo scored from a direct free-kick but Japan was level three minutes later in bizarre fashion.

Yugo Ichiyanagi scored with a header but UAE referee Ali Al-badwawi signaled for a free-kick. The official then overruled his own decision and awarded the goal.

The winner came when Kim Jong Jun scored with a 15-meter free-kick that sailed past keeper Kenya Matsui.

"We have to accept the fact that we lost," said Japan coach Yasharu Sorimachi. "I feel a lot of responsibility. We will have to learn from the North Koreans and their strong mentality."

North Korea coach Ri Jong Man said his team was getting better with each game.

"During our previous matches we were not 100 percent ready," he said.

"Now we are used to the ground, we prepared more and our players are in better condition. I think we can aim for the gold medal. Unexpected things may happen."

Defending champions Iran ended India's unlikely hopes of making it to the last eight with a 2-0 win to top Group D.

India held out until 12 minutes from time when Jalal Akbari Kelishadi scored from a free-kick with Asash Borhani hitting the second in injury time.

China went through to the last eight with a 2-1 win against Oman.

Oman took the lead from the penalty spot in the 29th minute when China goalkeeper Wang Dalei was penalized for a foul and Ahmed Al Mukhaini slotted the ball home.

Gao Lin leveled before Fawzi Bait Doorben was sent off for shoving Wang Dalei in the face on the stroke of half-time.

A scuffle broke out prior to the kick-off for the second half and Al Mukahini was red-carded for pushing Chen Tao to the ground.

Zheng Zie then scored a penalty to make it 2-1 but he missed a later spotkick in the 74th minute.

As well as the two red cards, nine players were booked.

China will now face holders Iran in the last eight.

Iraq went through to the last eight as a best runner-up with a 4-0 demolition of Malaysia thanks to goals from Ali Rehema, Younes Khalef (2) and Mostafa Abd Alla.

Iraq, playing in its first Asian Games for 20 years, will face Uzbekistan in the quarterfinals.

The final quarterfinals will see Qatar take on Thailand. *AFP*

Iranian Hercules snares weightlifting gold

DOHA, QATAR—WINNING THE gold medal at the Sydney Olympics opened a few doors for Iranian weightlifter Hossein Rezazadeh.

Turkey offered him $20,000 a month, a luxury villa and a reward of $10 million if he would change his citizenship and win them a gold at Athens. He turned it down. Instead, the "Iranian Hercules" had a couple of banks named after him and was given a Badge of Courage from President Mohammad Khatami.

It cost him the 10 million. He defended his title in Athens, for Iran.

But Rezazadeh is still smiling.

He lifted 195 kilograms in the snatch and 230 in the clean and jerk to win the Asian Games over-105-kilogram division. And as he held the final lift over his head, he nodded his head and grinned. It was Iran's first gold at the games.

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HOSSEIN Reza Zadeh shouts as he lifts up 195 kg in snatch to win the gold. AP

"I was so happy just thinking about my people and getting gold for them," he said. "They support me no matter what."

Named the world's best weightlifter in 2000, 2002 and 2004, the 164-kilogram behemoth has won six Asian Championship golds and 10 at the World Championships.

On Wednesday he missed out on one big honor, however.

His lifts at the games fell far short of the world record combined total of 472 kilograms he set at Sydney in 2000. It was clear he wasn't trying. He stopped after successfully lifting 230 on his first clean and jerk, well below the 263 kilograms he lifted in Athens.

"I just came here for the gold medal, not the record," he said. "I'm concentrating all my efforts on Beijing. I want to get my third Olympic gold in a row."

The only lifter to set a world record at the games Wednesday was China's Mu Shuangshuang, who cleared 139 kilograms in the women's over-75-kg division. Mu broke the previous record of 138 kilograms set by Jang Mi-ran of South Korea in May this year. *AP*

THE Philippine wushu team, accompanied by WFP honorary president Francis Chan, called on First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, WFP honorary chair, recently. From left are Rene Catalan, Peter Quina, Kenneth Lim, Willy Wang, Ms Juris Soliman, assistant secretary, Office of the President; Francis Chan, Edward Foloyang, Rexel Nganhayna, Janice Hung and Mark Ediva. Mr. Arroyo gave the athletes pocket money and promised a substantial reward for a gold medal.

Nike Fil-Am squads increase lead

BAGUIO CITY—THE "THREE-PEAT"-SEEKING, rookie-laden Nike Golf-Pacsports Fil and Am squads churned out superb rounds yesterday to stay in control halfway through the 57th Fil-Am Invitational being played in two courses here.

Mark Fernando fired a two-under-par 67 at the Camp John Hay layout worth 38 points to pace the Nike Golf Pacsports's Fil team, while tournament newcomer Jessie Balasabas assembled a level 61 over at the Baguio Country Club for 36 points to lead Nike's Am team, which had the title virtually locked up.

Together with the identical 37 by former national player Jun Bernis, Boyet Zaragoza and Joseph Labajo, Nike's Fil team totaled 149 for 295, 11 points ahead of perennial chaser Southwoods, which carded a 146.

Fil action moves to the Country Club for the final two days, even as Nike's Am team virtually decided the race as Balasabas, the second National Caddies' Open champion, drew super backup scores from Dave Hernandez (33), Rufino Bayron (32) and Mario Labajo (30) for a second round 131.

With Am play moving to the longer but easier John Hay layout for the last 36 holes, Nike's 265 (134-131) total and 23-point lead also over Southwoods seemed "a safe enough cushion," according to non-playing team captain Tommy Manotoc.

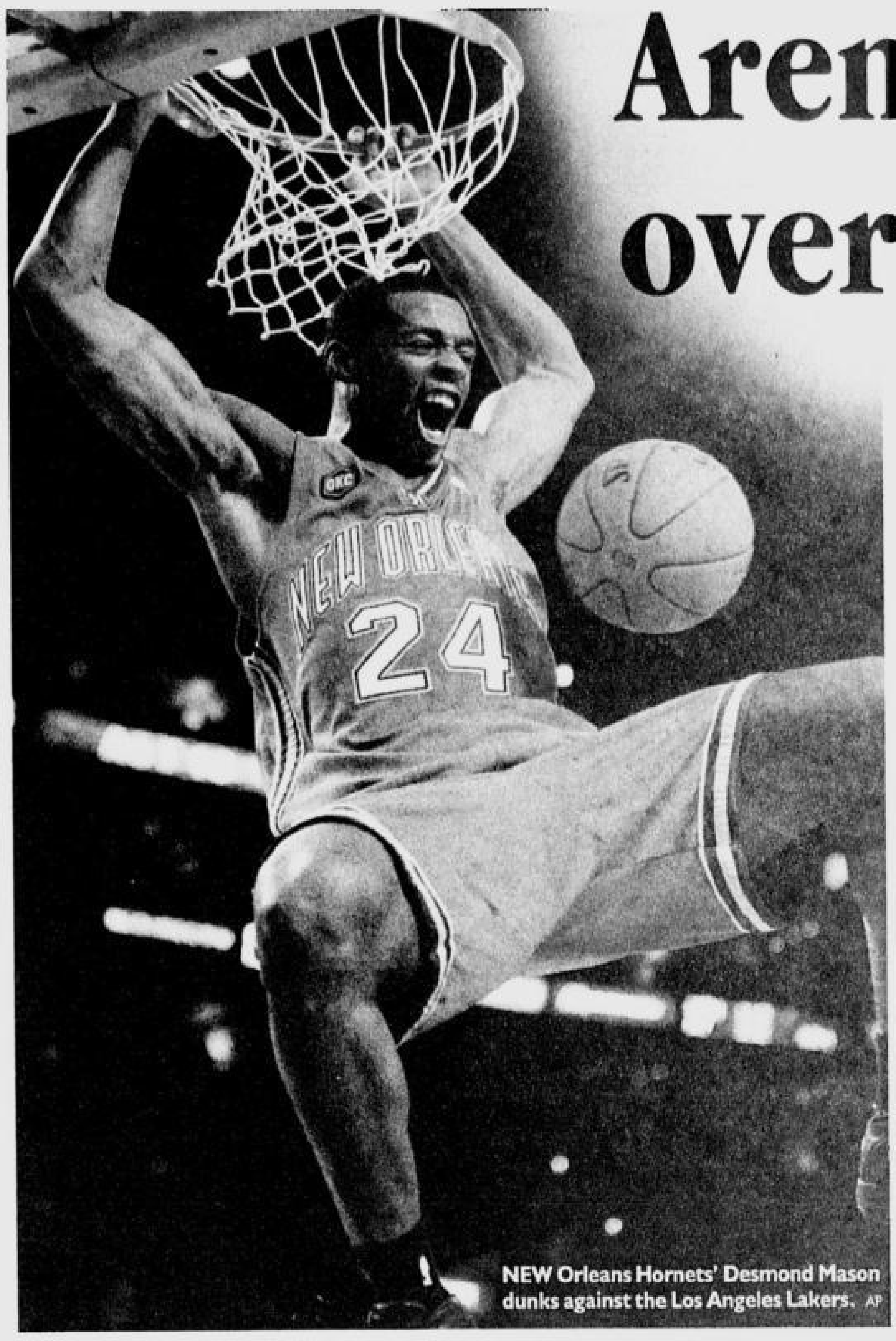
"I'm comfortable with the lead that we have," Manotoc told the INQUIRER over the phone. "But Fil action (at the Country Club) is still wide open and anything can still happen. We just have to keep our composure."

Southwoods' Fil team was led by Mike Alejandro's 38, with Jong Laput and Erwin Vinluan carding 37s and the 34 of either Anthony Fernando or Tonlits Asistio counting.

Del Monte shot 125 to keep third place in the Fil Division with 259 followed by Eastridge 130-254 and Mizuno 130-245.

Team Nueva Ecija carded 123 for 252 to lead the Fil Division Flight A with 252. Second was Forest Hills with 122 and 239. Camp Aguinaldo combined for 121 to place third with 238.

Arenas leads Wizards over Knicks; Cavs win


NEW Orleans Hornets' Desmond Mason dunks against the Los Angeles Lakers. AP

NEW YORK—GILBERT ARENAS SCORED 38 POINTS, AND THE WASHINGTON Wizards used a sizzling performance from 3-point range to beat the New York Knicks, 113-102, Wednesday night for their first road victory of the season.

In a complete turnaround from their last visit to New York, the Wizards went 14-of-20 from behind the arc, tying the franchise record and matching an NBA season high for makes. In a 102-82 loss at Madison Square Garden on Nov. 15, the Wizards tied an NBA record for futility by misfiring on all 15 3-point attempts.

Arenas and Antawn Jamison combined to go 0-for-11 that night, but each made six Wednesday.

Jamison added a season-high 33 points for Washington, playing for the first time since snapping Dallas' 12-game winning streak on Monday. Though only 1-8 on the road, the Wizards have won four of five overall.

Eddy Curry scored 22 points for the Knicks, extending his streak of 20-point games to eight. New York put all five starters in double figures but was dreadful on the other end.

Cavaliers 95, Raptors 91

LeBron James scored 26 points and did everything Cleveland needed him to in the final minutes, rallying the Cavaliers over the visiting Raptors.

With Cleveland down by seven, James dished out three assists, grabbed a rebound and scored five points—two on a dunk—during a 13-0 burst that put the Cavs ahead 90-86. After Fred Jones drained a 3-pointer for Toronto, James fed Donyell Marshall for a 3 to make it 93-89 with 17.9 seconds remaining.

Chris Bosh and Anthony Parker had 18 apiece and rookie Andrea Bargnani 14 for the Raptors.

Pacers 94, Magic 80

At Indianapolis, Stephen Jackson and Al Harrington each scored 26 points to lead the Pacers over the Magic.

Jermaine O'Neal added 11 points and 11 rebounds, and Jeff Foster grabbed 18 rebounds for the Pacers (10-10), who returned home after losing their final three games of a six-game road trip.

Dwight Howard scored 20 points and Grant Hill added 16 for the Eastern Conference-leading Magic (14-6), who suffered their second loss at Indiana this season.

Spurs 96, Bobcats 76

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Tim Duncan shook off a slow start to score 25 points and the Spurs avenged a surprising home loss to Charlotte.

Charlotte, which won in San Antonio, 95-92, in overtime three weeks ago, led by seven in the first quarter, when Duncan missed three dunks. But San Antonio recovered and took an 11-point second-quarter lead and the Bobcats faded in the second half after guard Brevin Knight was ejected for picking up two technical fouls.

Sean May scored 18 points, Gerald Wallace had 15 and Raymond Felton added 13 points and nine assists for the Bobcats, who failed to win consecutive games for the first time this season.

Grizzlies 98, Celtics 96

At Boston, Rudy Gay's jumper with 2.6 seconds left lifted the Grizzlies over the Celtics.

Chucky Atkins scored 19 points and Lawrence Roberts added a career-high 18 points for the Grizzlies, who snapped a three-game losing streak and improved to 2-9 on the road.

The Grizzlies squandered a 17-point fourth-quarter lead, but Gay bailed them out when he took a Mike Miller pass and sank a long jumper from the top of the key with 2.6 seconds left.

Sebastian Telfair missed a long 3-pointer at the buzzer for Boston.

Paul Pierce scored 25 points and Gerald Green scored 16 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter for the Celtics, who lost their fourth straight.

Timberwolves 90, Rockets 84

In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett had 24 points and 12 rebounds and led a strong defensive effort by Minnesota against Houston and Yao Ming.

Yao had 14 points and eight rebounds, shooting only 5-for-19 from the field. Tracy McGrady didn't do much for the Rockets, either, finishing with 14 points on 5-for-21 shooting. He did have 10 rebounds and seven assists. *AP*

Another banner year for Tiger

WASHINGTON—SPORT IN NORTH AMERica in 2006 was punctuated with highlights and heartbreaks on the field, nagging questions, persistent rumors and criminal indictments off it.

For the eighth time in 10 years, Tiger Woods was the golfer of the year.

"This is really sweet," bellowed Woods in August after winning his third PGA Championship and 12th career major. "I just had one of those magical days on the greens."

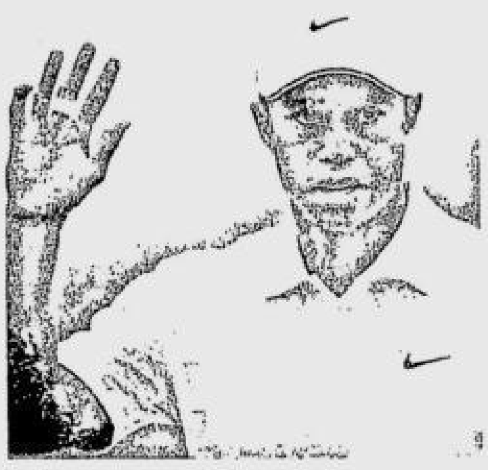
The 30-year-old Woods had many of those enchanting days. In fact he enters 2007 having won his last six PGA Tour events, the second time in his illustrious career that he has accomplished the feat.

Woods won 10 titles overall, including the British Open, and nearly $10 million in 2006—all the more remarkable considering he took nine weeks off to cope with the illness and subsequent death of his father Earl.

"It has been a long, challenging year, especially off the golf course," said the charismatic Woods.

It has also been a challenging year for Floyd Landis, the soft-spoken Californian whose Tour de France victory made the retirement of seven-time winner Lance Armstrong less painful for Americans.

Just days after claiming victory on the Champs-Elysees in Paris, however, Landis was found to have tested positive for testosterone following an astounding comeback in the final mountain stage of the world's most famous cycle race.


TIGER Woods: Nearly $10 million richer REUTERS

A day earlier, a poor performance had all but knocked him out of title contention. Though he has not yet been stripped of his title, Landis says he did nothing wrong and vows to clear his name.

"I have nothing to hide and nothing to regret," said the 31-year-old Landis, who could be the first Tour winner to lose the title.

Justin Gatlin, the Olympic champion who shares the 100 metres world record with Jamaican Asafa Powell, tested positive for the male sex hormone testosterone and its precursors at the Kansas Relays meeting in April.

An arbitration hearing next year will determine the length of the 24-year-old Gatlin's ban.

Trevor Graham, who has coached Gatlin as well as former triple Olympic champion Marion Jones, is awaiting trial after pleading innocent to charges of hindering the Balco steroids investigation whose targets include baseball's Barry Bonds.

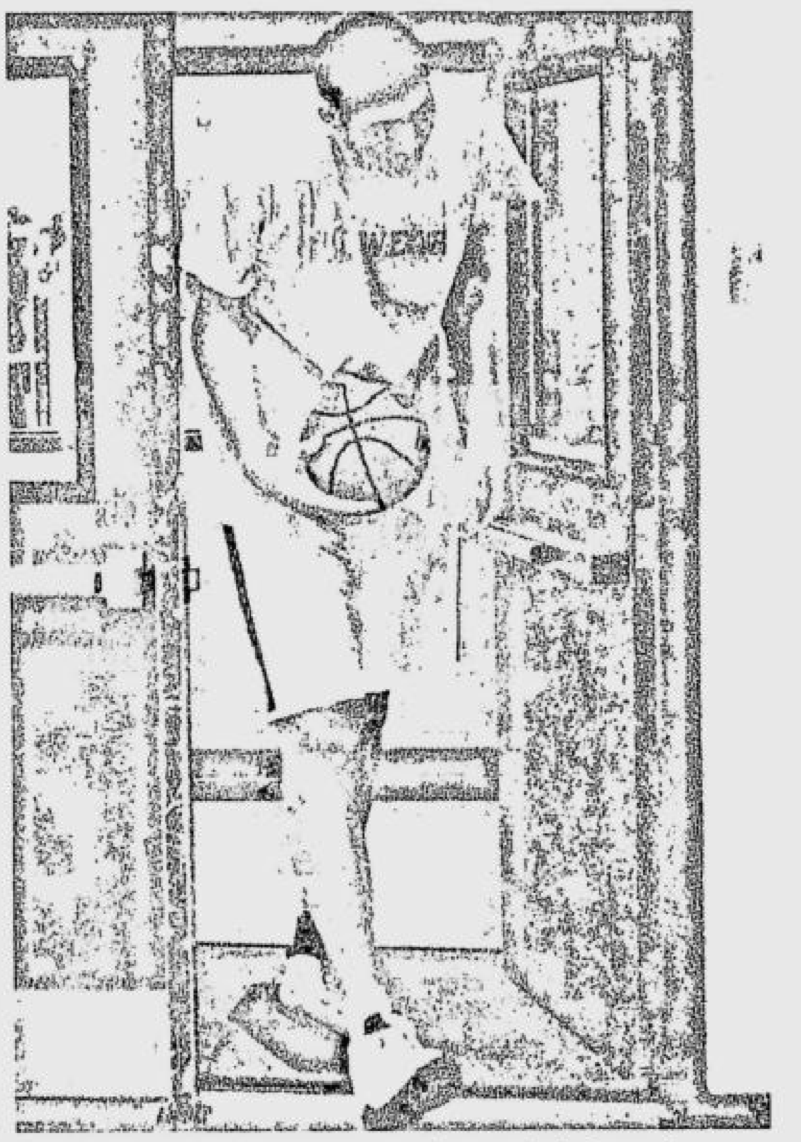
San Francisco Giants hero Bonds and fellow slugger Mark McGwire have never tested positive for steroids but continue to be the subject of swirling rumors.

McGwire, who retired in 2001 after belting 583 home runs, is up for the Hall of Fame next year and sportswriters ended 2006 wondering if the record-setting hitter should sit among baseball's all-time greats.

The 42-year-old Bonds needs just 22 home runs to pass Hank Aaron as baseball's all-time home run leader.

Commissioner Bud Selig said that baseball planned to commemorate the record but how big a celebration it gives to someone under a cloud of doping suspicion remains to be seen.

Bonds has other problems. He is under suspicion of lying to a federal grand jury investigating the Balco doping scandal and could face a maximum of five years in prison if convicted. *Reuters*


SUN Ming Ming bends to enter a gym for practice in Greensboro, N.C., Tuesday. At nearly 7-foot-9, the Chinese immigrant would be the tallest player in NBA history. But the pituitary tumor that led to his extraordinary size is also threatening his life and keeping him away from a career on a professional basketball court. AP

Bonds pitches for new deal with Giants

LAKE BUENA VISTA, FLORIDA—BARRY Bonds made a personal pitch for a new contract here Wednesday at the Major League Baseball winter meetings, hoping for a chance to become the all-time US home run king.

The 42-year-old outfielder who completed his deal with the San Francisco Giants wants $18 million for a one-year deal that would give him the chance to surpass Hank Aaron's all-time North American record of 755 homers.

Bonds, who has 734 career homers, walked through the hotel where executives and agents are making deals but gave no hint if any club besides the Giants was willing to gamble on a player clouded by accusations of doping.

The Giants, who paid Bonds $18 million last season, reportedly want to spend only $10 million on bringing Bonds back in 2007.

Bonds has denied wrongdoing or knowingly taking any steroids but grand jury testimony revealed by the San Francisco Chronicle had Bonds admitting to taking substances prosecutors in the Balco doping case believe were steroids.

Greg Anderson, Bonds' personal trainer, was among four men convicted in the Balco scandal that rocked athletics and baseball. The taint has dogged Bonds, who is jeered at ballparks except in front of Giants fans in San Francisco.

The Oakland A's, rumored to be interested in Bonds—reportedly signed a one-year deal with Mike Piazza for $8.5 million to become a designated hitter. *AFP*

Ryder Cup duo of Cink, Henry teaming up anew

ST. JAMES, BARBADOS—STEWART CINK doesn't know why so many top Americans turned down a chance to play in this year's World Cup. He's just thrilled they did—it gave him another chance to represent his country.

Cink is in the World Cup for the second straight year, this time teaming with J.J. Henry in the season's final World Golf Championships event, which starts Thursday. Six other American players ahead of Cink in the world golf rankings declined invitations, but the four-time US PGA Tour winner happily agreed to play.

"The longer I go on playing on the PGA Tour, the more I get a kick out of playing for the United States," Cink said. "It's just something that never gets old and whether it's the President's Cup, the Ryder Cup, the World Cup, whatever, it's just a lot of fun."

Cink chose Henry as his World Cup teammate largely because of their success together at this year's Ryder Cup, where they were among the lone American bright spots in another easy win by Europe.

Now, they'll aim to be the first American victors at the World Cup since Tiger Woods and David Duval won in 2000.

"We did make a great team," Henry said. "When we played together at the Ryder Cup, we played awfully good and I think we're comfortable with each other. We have similar games and styles we play. We both hit the ball about the same distance. Heck, we both putt with belly putters."

Cink and Henry halved both of their fourball matches at The K Club. *AP*

Kings forward suspended for drug-related violation

NEW YORK—SACRAMENTO Kings forward Maurice Taylor was suspended for five games without pay by the National Basketball Association here Wednesday for a violation of the league's anti-drug program.

The banishment will begin with Thursday's home game against the defending NBA champion Miami Heat and also include games next week against Atlanta, Golden State, Utah and Phoenix.

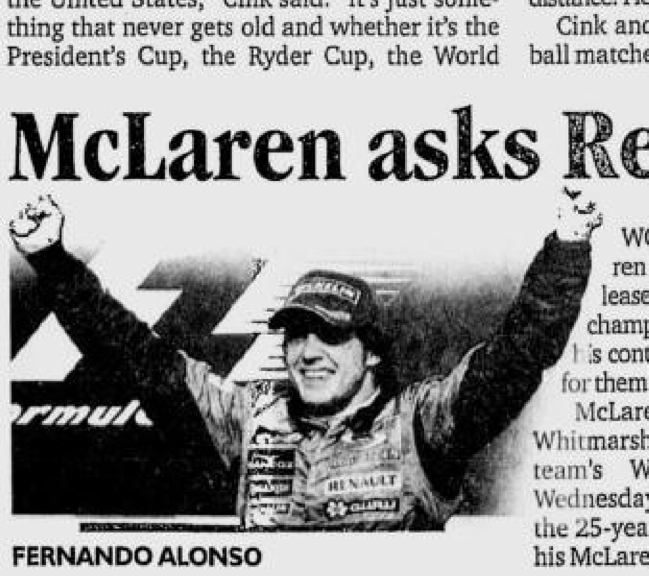
Further details regarding the violation were not disclosed.

Taylor will be eligible to return when the Kings play host to the Dallas Mavericks on Dec. 18.

The 30-year-old veteran is in his ninth NBA campaign, having spent three seasons with the Los Angeles Clippers, 3 1/2 with the Houston Rockets and 1 1/2 seasons with the New York Knicks before joining the Kings.

His only trip to the playoffs came in 2004 when he averaged 9.8 points a game for the Rockets. *AFP*

McLaren asks Renault to release Alonzo early


FERNANDO ALONSO

WOKING, ENGLAND—MCLAren have asked Renault to release double Formula One world champion Fernando Alonso from his contract early so that he can test for them in Spain next week.

McLaren chief executive Martin Whitmarsh told reporters at the team's Woking headquarters on Wednesday that he was still hoping the 25-year-old Spaniard could make his McLaren debut this year.

"Being frank about it, we'd like him in the car as quickly as we can," he said.

"After this week there's one more test and we'd like Renault to recognize everything that he's done for them and release him to come and test for us next week. We have requested it and if they said yes, we could do it."

Alonso, who agreed last year after winning his first title to switch to the Mercedes-powered team in 2007, has already had a seat fitting for McLaren but remains under contract to Renault until the end of the year.

Whitmarsh said he hoped to talk to Renault team boss Flavio Briatore at the International Automobile Federation awards ceremony in Monaco Friday.

"The earlier we can get Fernando in the car, the better," said Whitmarsh. "If, after two bottles of champagne, Flavio agrees on Friday night then we'll rush around to get him (Alonso) in the car next week. *Reuters*

SPORTS

Domingo risks bantamweight crown tonight

PHILIPPINE BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPION Michael Domingo of the ALA Stable will defend his title for the fourth time tonight against top-ranked Edgar Gabejan in a 12-round tiff at the Talisay Sports Complex in Cebu.

Domingo won the RP crown with a technical decision over Joel Bauya last year, and defended it against Rolly Lunas, Roger Galicia and Johnny Lear.

This is Domingo's first fight since losing by a ninth-round knockout last October against Frenchman Frederic Patrac while challenging for the World Boxing Foundation bantam crown in Agde, France.

In the chief support, world-ranked Bert Batawang goes up against Rey Orais while hard-hitting Rocky Fuentes takes on Rolly Mandahinog in another tenner.

If victorious, Fuentes hopes to vie for the vacant WBO Asia Pacific flyweight title next.

The rest of the card pits Mark Jason Melligen against Rex Marzan; Reman Salim versus Rico Genon; Rogen Flores versus Roel Honor; Rashid Bacus against Jerry Manganip; and Marjo Borres versus Ranie Pamatian. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

Barte, Dandan advance

RALPH Barte reaches out for a shot. ERIK ARAZAS

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT like an All-Filipino finals.

This after the over-achieving Ralph Kevin Barte hurdled his Australian foe to join Filipino top seed Kyle Joshua Dandan in the boys' singles semifinals of the Phinma-ITF juniors tennis championships week 2 yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The unseeded 17-year-old Barte thrashed Matheson Klein, 6-4, 6-4, to stay on a collision course with his more popular compatriot, who crushed seventh seed Shin Jeong-ik of South Korea, 6-2, 6-3.

Barte, who hails from Davao City, expressed surprise over his winning spree but vowed to go all the way in his bid for a first ITF title.

"It's going to be a tough match (against Dandan)," confided Barte, who had earlier ousted second seed Won Choi-jae of Korea. "But I will try my best to win."

But he has to first hurdle Japanese Yuki Matsuo, who beat him last week in the tourney's initial phase. Matsuo, ranked 317th in the world juniors, advanced by eliminating Malaysian Mahd Ashaa Zainal, 6-2, 6-2.

Dandan, last week's champ, was never threatened by Shin, zooming to a 5-1 lead to rule the first set. Shin moved within 3-4 in the next set but the faster Filipino won the next two points to clinch the match in one hour and 40 minutes.

"I really want to win this tournament and with the way I'm playing I'm very confident that I can," said the 17-year-old Dandan, who is now ranked 173rd in the world.

Dandan's semifinal foe will be Japanese Toshiya Suzuki, who booted out third seed and last week's runner-up Martin Studeny of Czech Republic, 6-1, 6-2. Their match is set at 9 a.m. today.

In the girls' singles, unseeded Japanese Misa Eguchi shocked top seed Malaysian Jawairiah Noordin, 6-3, 7-5, even as No. 8 Filipina Jessica Marie Agra also created a stir by booting out third seed Veronika Studena of Czech Republic, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (4).

Eguchi, ranked No. 1656, will face unseeded Korean Kim Kun-hee, who eliminated fourth-seeded Russian and last week's champion Nadezda Guskova, 6-4, 6-4. Agra faces Russian Elizaveta Titova.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Petro Dollar (7), Rho Sig (3), I Remain (4), Taning Ikaw (1)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Ultra Rose (1), Dancing Polly (5), Windlass (6), Sweet Xarah (4)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Strong Jyas (6), Rock Attack Attack (1), Hezabellagio (4), Besame Mucho (2)

Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Karma (5), Sutter's Quest (1), Key Element (7), Full of Fury (6), Ayan Na Ko (2)

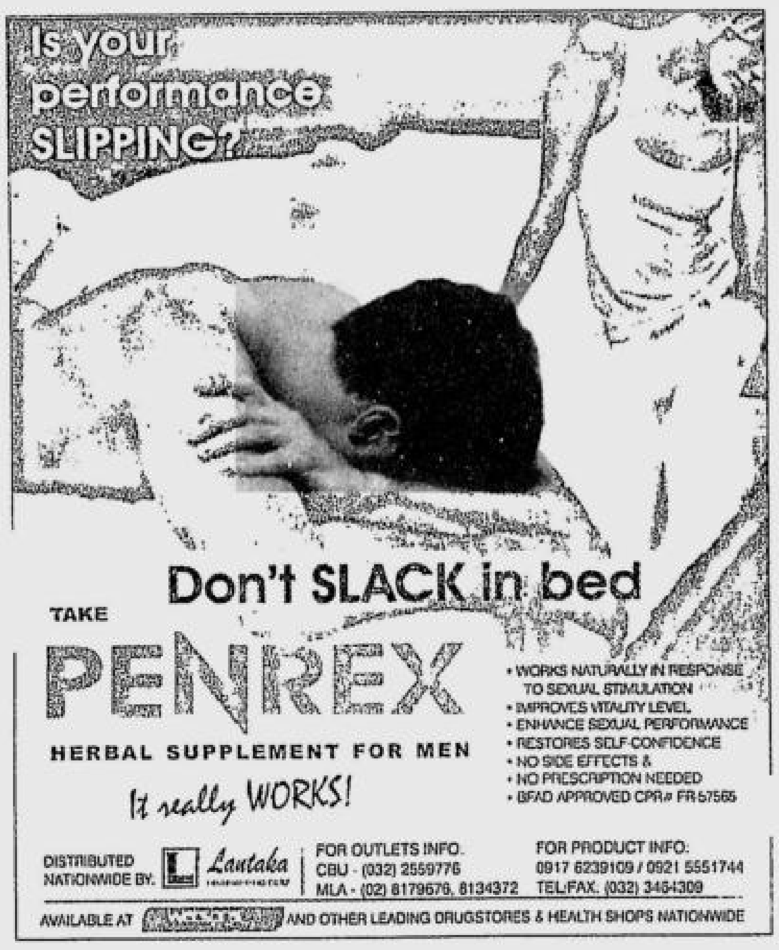
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Lord Gold (6), Mainstary (4), Latina (1), Long Hitter (3)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Rush (2), Puppy Dog Tall (8), angel of Light (6), Odyssey Blue (7)

Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—June Siete (2), Lyanjonik (2), Bachelor of Arts (6), Coeuer D'Honneur (5)

Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Run Like D'Wind (1), Odyssey (2), Dato's Pride (4), Speed Bullet (6)

Race 9—(Super Six/Qrt/Tri)—Pride and Joy (6), Miss Lilypilly (13), Cease Fire (11), Crowning Glory (9), District Three (5), Arctic Desert (3)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DASMARIÑAS—NICO PUPOS CELEBRATED his 21st birthday by scoring 31 points to power the Asian College of Science and Technology Lightnings past the National College of Business and Arts Wildcats, 95-78, in the 14th Petron-National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball tournament last Wednesday at the De La Salle-Dasmariñas gym here.

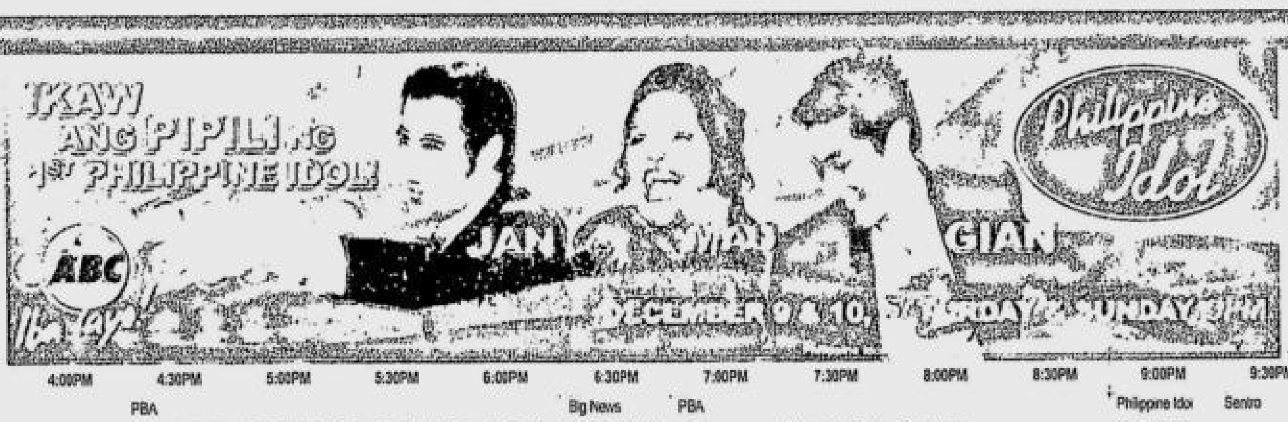
Their fifth triumph in seven matches give the Lightnings the solo lead, putting them closer to one of four Final Four semifinals slots.

The Lightnings are ahead of the defending champion St. Francis Doves, who are at 4-1 after turning back the Philippine School of Business Administration Jaguars, 86-69.

Lenon Lasin and Angel Salado poured in 15 points for the La Salle-Dasmariñas Patriots as they outplayed the Olivarez College Sea Lions, 85-76, to tie at third the Arellano University Chiefs, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Maroons and the Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals on similar 3-1 cards.

Pupos hit a triple with 5:27 left, capping a 15-7 run that gave the Lightings an 80-70 lead after the Wildcats threatened, 63-65, at the end of the third period.

INQUIRER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ABC 5	Nickelodeon				PBA				Big News	PBA				Philippine Idol	Sentro	Real Stories		Araw-Araw Prem-yo Sa Hapon	Letty La Mas Fea
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Inocente De Ti	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Beet The Vandel Buster	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo (8:15 PM)		Maalaala Mo Kaya			Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Alias (Season V)		Lost (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season VI)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Beastmaster (Season I)		Guinness World Records	E Buzz	The Rundown				Bad Boys II	
bTV		TV Shopping		NBA: Heat @ Kings					NBA Home Video Kareem-Reflections		Bballography: Dave Bing	OverTime: Jerry West	FIBA World Basketball	NBA Spls: Soul of the Game	NBA: Heat @ Kings				
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	My Gym Partner's A Monkey	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	Mirumo De Pon	Pokemon The Johto Journey Scooby Doo & Witch's Ghost Pokemon The Johto Journey	The Justirisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King
Cinema One		Okay Ka Fairy Ko The Movie				Narito Ang Puso Ko				Esperanza The Movie				Batas Na Lansangan				Birador	
Cinemax		The Birds (3:10 PM)					The Flash (5:20 PM)			Dawn Of The Dead				Revenge Of The Ninja				Blade Squad	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		The Closer		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Profiler		City Confidential		Law and Order		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Without A Trace		The Unit	
Discovery Channel	Connect	Extreme Machines		Power Zone		Speed Week	Moon Machines	Beyond Tomorrow		Rides		American Chopper		How Do They Do It	Moon Machines	How Techies Changed The World W/ Shatner		Crime Scene Psychics	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Emperor's New School	America's Funniest Home Videos High School Musical Sing-A-Long	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Billiards Intl Events '05		High School Basketball '05 Powerade Jamfest		Uefa Champions League Highlights		Australian Open Golf Ship '06 Day 2				Golf Programming	English Premier League Preview	Sportscenter Asia	Premier Snooker League 2005				Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars Season 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Everwood Season 2		American Dreams 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (DeGeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Makita Ka Lang Muli	Now and Forever	Into The Sun		Dragonball Z	Ghost Fighter	Jewel In The Palace		24 Oras	Captain Barbell	Atlantika (7:45 PM)		Bakekang	A Rosy Life (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang		Saksi	
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Just Cause		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Family Law		Midsomer Murders: The Fisher King				Regenesis	
HBO			Side Out			Amber Frey: Witness For The Prosecution				The Witches Of Eastwick				Stealth				Stealth	
Hero TV	Di-Gata Defenders	Sunny Pig	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Saiyuki Reload	Naruto	Monkey Turn	Gundam Seed Destiny	Full Metal Panic	Galaxy Angels	Voltes V Evolution	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Astroboy	Three-Eyed One	Naruto	Raijin-Oh	Di-Gata Defenders	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	New Life Shopping Network		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Karera Sports TV	
JackTV		Back Track				Sweet	X-Play	Heat		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hates Chris	Family Guy	American Dad	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	30 Minute Meals	Sweet Dreams	Rachel Ray		Smart Solutions	DIY: Jewelry Making	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Martha		Clean House		Rachel Ray		Isaac		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure
MTV Philippines		MTV Hits	VH1 Fabulous Life Celeb Couples		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	MTV Hits	MTV Diyes		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV News	Rockola	Rockesta on MTV	MTV Hits
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Secrets Unveiled				Top 5		Nat'l Geographic Specials		WOW!		Top Gun Week		Oasis			
NBN					Dinig Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo		GSIS Member's Hour		Ting Ng Bayan		Teledyaryo Final Edition		World Pool Championship					
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubuyog		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Asian Anime Fest: Avatar The Legend Of Aang/ Kappa Mikey		SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Trollz	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants/ Dark Oracle	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Eagle Squad				Despedida				Ang Pagbabalik ni Pedro Penduko				Jelangkung				Boso
Qtv	Pawnshop No. 8	Samurai X	Hikaru No Go	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle	Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Extranatural
RPN 9	TV Shopping	Mundo	Popeye & Son	Chinese Movie	Mr. Fighting	RPN Aksyon Balita		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	NCIS		CSI: Miami		Without A Trace		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Shepherds Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports	Golf Today									Sagupaan	Autofocus		Nopi Tunervision	Raceworld		Sportsdesk		Asian Games	
Star Movies		Phantom Below (3:15 PM)				Jiminy Glick In La La Wood			Die Another Day (6:45 PM)					Today You Die			Commando		
Star World	Two And A Half Men	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Desire Table For Three		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		Third Watch		Desire Table For Three		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	Superman The Animated Series	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	7th Heaven	Charmed (8:15 PM)		Ghost Whisperer (9:15 PM)		News Central	Omen (10:45PM)		MYXlog
UNTV				KNC Show	Kakampi Mo Ang Batas		Kaka at Clara Kasagayay Nyo		Public Hearing	Make My Day		Ang Dating Daan (8:15 PM)							

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Foreign reserves hit new high of $22.5B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S FOREIGN RESERVES CLIMBED to a new high of $22.49 billion at end-November, despite the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' decision to settle more debts ahead of maturity during the period.

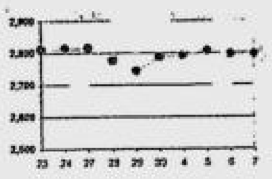
The gross international reserves (GIR)—the key indicator of a country's ability to service the foreign exchange requirements of its economy—had increased by $180 million compared to the $22.31 billion recorded at end-October, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said in a press statement.

The GIR consists of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, foreign investments and special drawing rights from multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund.

Proceeds from the government's health sector program loan from the Asian Development Bank, the

FOREIGN/ B4

INDICATORS



(See stock market report on Page B6)

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 49.45 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 7, 2006

Shares close flat

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed flat as the market continued in a narrow range consolidation after this year's sustained gains, reaching nine-year highs, dealers said.

The composite in-

SHARES/ B4

INSIDE

Cocktales

/B5

RP hopes to get Texas Instruments' $1-B project

/B2

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RP hopes to win Texas Instruments' $1-B project

Efficiency of Baguio plant big factor in making decision

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL INDUSTRY stakeholders are optimistic that US semiconductor firm Texas Instruments Inc. will choose the Philippines over China for its $1-billion Asian expansion.

An industry source said TI would likely choose Clark Special Economic Zone as the location of its new facility in the country, which was expected to create 4,000 new jobs there.

One of the biggest factors that could persuade the US firm to invest more in the Philippines, the source said, was the efficiency of its existing manufacturing plant in Baguio City.

The Baguio facility churns out around 40 percent of the TI group's global output, which are supplied to the world's biggest mobile phone manufacturers.

"The Baguio plant is one of the most efficient plants that the TI group has in the world. Although China should have been a favorable choice for them, since they have yet to establish their presence there, they're opting for the Philippines and that's because of the efficiency of their Baguio plant," the source told reporters.

The company's expansion plan is expected to boost the development of the Northern Luzon area, the source added.

"Right now, most of the developments are in the south. We think that the whole area (Northern Luzon) will really grow, especially with TI locating there," the source said.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila refused to comment on this report but expressed optimism that the $1-billion TI investment would go the Philippines.

In a related development, Semiconductor and Electronics Industries of the Philippines Inc. (Seipi) executive director Ernesto Santiago said more than 10 companies in the industry had plans to expand their operations next year.

"Those are just indications, but we're really expecting a lot of expansions since global business has been good," he said. "We thought the business was overheating, as we saw signs of that around October, but now the market is growing again."

Industry investments from January to October this year, he said, had reached $674 million for 98 projects, higher than the $456 million in investments in 80 projects in the same period last year.

"If TI comes in, that will be $1 billion. They have yet to make an announcement," he said.

For this year, Seipi expects the industry to grow 10 percent, and expand by another 10 percent next year.

Meralco completes ₱12-B note issuance

LOPEZ-LED MANILA ELECTRIC Co. has completed its P12 billion worth of seven-year fixed- and floating-rate corporate notes, the proceeds from which will be used to refinance the company's secured loan obligations and fund its working capital requirements.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Meralco said half of the issue involved fixed-rate notes while the other half represented floating-rate notes. The fixed-rate notes carried an interest rate of 9 percent per year.

The auction for the floating rate notes, which were priced at 200 points over the three-month MART1 rate, generated P12 billion in offers.

Participating noteholders included Bank of the Philippine Islands and BPI Asset Management and Trust Group, Banco de Oro Universal Bank and BDO Private Bank, Equitable PCIBank, China Banking Corp., Philippine National Bank, Development Bank of the Philippines, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., and Union Bank of the Philippines.

Equitable PCIBank acted as the facility agent, registrar and paying agent for the corporate notes, while BDO Capital and Investment Corp., BPI Capital Corp., Chinabank, DBP, PCI Capital Corp. and PNB Capital and Investment Corp. were the joint issue managers and underwriters.

BDO Capital was Meralco's financial advisor.

In an earlier interview, Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said the company would likely increase its capital expenditure budget by P250 million to P500 million next year. *Abigail L. Ho*

A non-caring, non-sharing Asean

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

"I HOPE ASEAN 2006 WILL NOT BE A REpeat of the GATT-WTO discussions of 1995. That's when the Philippines practiced 'unilateral disarmament' by reducing our agricultural tariffs to unreasonably low levels. This will cause more suffering, and make the caring and sharing Asean rhetoric a farce," said Elias Inciong at the leaders meeting of the Alyansa Agrikultura last July 4.

It is often said that the Philippines reduced its tariffs too rapidly without the necessary competitive analysis and consultation for each affected sector. The result has been slow growth, less jobs, and increased poverty.

The Philippines, however, has shown effective international leadership in promoting equity and not just growth. In 1996, when the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Summit was held in the Philippines, then President Fidel Ramos succeeded in getting 18 heads of states to sign a declaration changing Apec's direction from trade liberalization to sustainable development. It argued that Apec's real goal should be sustainable development, where trade liberalization is implemented only if it serves this objective.

Again, at the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Meeting in December 2005, the Philippines led in implementing this direction in the G33 (Group of 33 developing nations). Together with Indonesia, Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban and Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano succeeded in institutionalizing the categories of Special Products (SP) and Special Safeguard Mechanisms (SSM) in the unanimously approved WTO declaration. SPs and SSMs allow countries to have special tariff and protection arrangements to protect deserving sectors from too rapid liberalization.

Asean situation

During the Alyansa meeting, Riza Bernabe of Centro Saka said, "Our research on Asean shows that the relatively uniform application of rapid agricultural tariff reduction in Asean has been harmful to us. While we used to have an overall positive trade balance, today it is negative. We now import more than we export from seven out of our nine Asean partners. The only exceptions are Cambodia and Laos."

Omy Royandoyan, Alyansa Agrikultura president, said "despite the rhetoric of a caring and sharing Asean, the primordial concern appears to be lowering tariffs at an alarmingly fast rate. It looks like Asean is engaged in a race to the bottom."

"We reject regional integration with this emphasis and, instead, support the 'Asean community,' which focuses on people rather than profits," Royandoyan added.

Arsenio Tanchuling, chair of the ongoing Alyansa-sponsored farmer and fisherfolk conference on Asean, added: "Asean decisions must be guided by agriculture's multi-functionality. This means agriculture not only serves the profit function but also addresses even more critical areas such as food security, livelihood, poverty alleviation, environment, ecological balance and global warming. Gender equity must also be addressed. Unless we do this, Asean will cause further damage to our people."

Teaming up with government

Alyansa leaders said that agriculture has been neglected in Asean discussions in the past. But from talks with Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, they hope this changes quickly.

They agreed with Serrano's suggestion that Asean discussions should not be limited to economic ministers, they should also include agriculture ministers who are more knowledgeable about the agricultural situation.

It is disappointing that in the ongoing Asean Business and Investment Summit, the Department of Trade and Industry plays an important role, while the DA is hardly mentioned. It is, however, fortunate that, while there is no agricultural representative in the Asean Business Advisory Council (Abac), Philippine Abac member Jose Concepcion has agreed to bring the Alyansa's concerns to the meeting with the Asean heads of states on Dec. 11.

Building on gains

We have to build on our gains, instead of allowing them to disappear. For example, Asean tariff reductions must follow the principle of trade liberalization serving sustainable development that we gained in the 1996 Apec Summit. Also, the SPs and SSMs that we won in the 2005 WTO meet should be implemented in the Asean to protect deserving vulnerable sectors.

Why not follow the WTO practice that provides average tariff rates for a cluster of products, rather than the current Asean practice of specifying a rate for each of all these products? The first allows a country to adjust tariff rates depending on its unique situation, while achieving the targeted average rate.

We can gain much from the Asean Community, but only if we focus on sustainable development, people rather than profits, agricultural multi-functionality and gender equity. Asean can then live up to its promise of a caring and sharing community. Otherwise, we will see more sufferings ahead.

(The author is Agriwatch chair; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry. E-mail agriwatchphil@yahoo.com)

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Treasury to sell P6B worth of treasury bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL SELL P6 billion worth of regular three-year treasury bonds on Monday to make up for its failure to raise in full the P20 billion it expected from Retail Treasury Bonds.

In a memorandum to securities dealers, the Bureau of the Treasury said the bonds to be auctioned off on Dec. 10 will be a reissue of the regular three-year bonds sold in February this year.

The three-year bonds fetched an interest rate of 8.5 percent during the February auction.

The government offered P20 billion worth of RTBs to potential investors for a two-week period ending last Wednesday. However, only P8.3 billion were sold due to the low interest rate fetched by the bonds.

During the price-setting auction held on Nov. 27, the RTBs fetched a rate of 5.875 percent.

The interest rate for the new RTBs was lower than the 7.25 percent recorded during the issuance of RTBs last year, the 10 percent fetched by RTBs that matured last July, and the 11 percent fetched by those that would mature in December.

"If ... the market wants to take (P8.3 billion), then we will put it at that," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said. "We will now close the RTB chapter."

Cruz said the government issued the RTBs because of market requests. Unlike regular bonds, RTBs are fit for small-time, individual investors because the minimum investment required is only P5,000.

But the treasurer said the appetite for the RTBs waned because of the unattractive interest rate it fetched.

The low interest rate for the RTBs was partly a result of the improving fiscal condition of the government and the slowing down of inflation, Cruz said. An improving fiscal condition makes the government more credit worthy, resulting in a declining interest rate imposed on its borrowings.

The government canceled the issuance of P18 billion worth of Treasury bills and bonds that were supposed to be issued this month after it decided to issue P20 billion worth of RTBs.

But because the expected proceeds of the RTBs were not realized, Cruz said, the government had to issue bonds. This will help government raise its borrowing requirements and cover expenditure requirements for the year.

The government was supposed to borrow P582.5 billion from the domestic market through the issuance of government securities, according to the 2006 fiscal program. But year-to-date domestic borrowing stands at only P247 billion.

The lower-than-programmed domestic borrowing is attributed to the government's shrinking budget deficit, which allowed the BTr to cancel scheduled auctions for Treasury bills and bonds in the past months.

The government originally set its deficit ceiling for this year at P125 billion, but fiscal authorities said tighter-than-expected spending and increase in revenue collection in the past months could result in an actual deficit figure of P115 billion or less.

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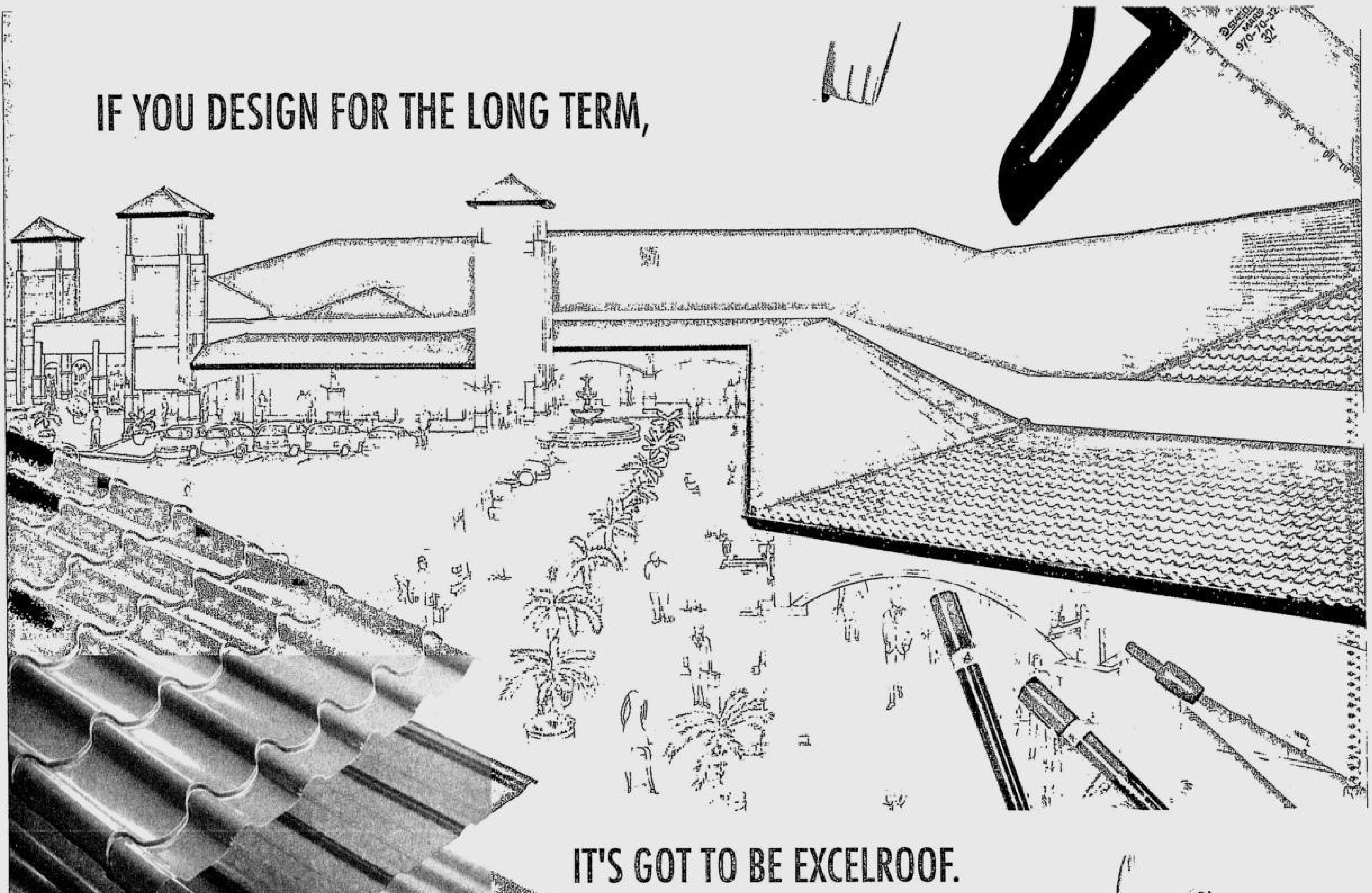
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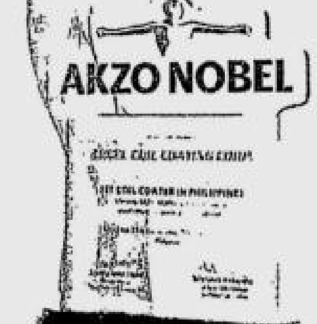

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Maynilad buyers hope to top MWCI's performance

By Christine A. Gaylican and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE GROUP OF DMCI HOLDINGS Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp., which recently acquired the concession to supply water to Metro Manila's west zone, expects to top the service improvements undertaken in the east zone by Manila Water Co. Inc., a unit of the Ayala group.

DMCI and MPIC officials led by Metro Pacific Investments Corp. chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan said that within a year, water services in the west zone would significantly improve.

DMCI and MPIC successfully offered $447.23-million for the government's 83.9-percent stake in Maynilad Water Services Inc., acquiring the right to operate the utility, servicing over 8 million customers in the west zone.

"Our partnership focuses to achieve a set-up that would do better than what has been done in the east zone," said Jose Ma K. Lim, MPIC president, during the formal turnover at the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's headquarters in Quezon City.

Lim said that MPIC and its partner DMCI are prepared to tackle the service requirements in the west zone in order to increase the level of water delivered to customers.

DMCI chief executive officer Isidro Consunji said that the group's first objective is to sort out Maynilad and get out of rehabilitation within a year.

This would mean a settlement or re-negotiation of Maynilad's $300-million debt to local and foreign banks and to the government regulator, Consunji said.

According to Pangilinan, the group is now in talks with banks that are willing to finance the settlement of the debts.

"Whatever financing is needed ... the parent company and our partners in Hong Kong are willing to provide it," Pangilinan said.

In a statement filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), Maynilad reported that it had posted a turnaround in 2005, recording a net income of P1.41 billion for the period, compared with losses of P2.31 billion in 2004.

Revenues, mainly from water and sewer services and interest income, surged 77 percent to P7.23 billion in 2005 from P4.08 billion in 2004.

At the market, DMCI yesterday closed at P6.20, up 8.8 percent from its last traded price of P5.70.

Metro Pacific Corp. shares, which will be replaced by MPIC shares on Dec. 15 following a restructuring process, were still suspended as of yesterday. MPC last Nov. 22 closed at P2.08 apiece.

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Foreign reserves hit . . .

From page B1

National Power Corp.'s bond issue, as well as the BSP's foreign exchange operations and earnings from offshore investments, helped in lifting the end-November GIR.

"The steady buildup of the GIR level enabled the BSP to prepay during the month $215 million in loans and notes originally maturing in 2008 and 2010, as well as service its maturing foreign exchange obligations and those of the national government," Tetangco said.

The government in November also bought back $165 million worth of Brady bonds maturing in 2007 up to 2010.

Last June, the government bought back $411 million worth of Brady bonds.

The bonds were named after Nicholas Brady, treasury chief of the United States during the term of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. The bonds were issued to help indebted countries like the Philippines restructure their commercial debts.

"The end-November GIR level is adequate to cover about 4.5 months of imports of goods and payments of services and income," Tetangco said.

Also, the country's net international reserve level, which factors in the revaluation of reserve assets and liabilities, increased to $22.23 billion from the end-October level of $22.06 billion.

NIR refers to the difference between the GIR and the combined total of short-term liabilities and use of IMF credits.

The country's strong foreign reserve buildup since the start of the year was supported by proceeds from the government's foreign borrowings, remittances from overseas workers, foreign direct investment and, in recent months, the strong influx of portfolio investments.

The strengthening of the peso against the dollar in the last few months, alongside the bullish regional currency market, allowed the BSP to build up its reserves while smoothening excess market volatility.

The government has taken advantage of the strong foreign exchange inflow by paying more debts ahead of maturity.

The BSP has also settled a total of $1.17 billion in foreign debts since the start of the year.

Shares close flat

From page B1

dex slipped 1.61 points at 2,796.18 after trading between 2,774.97 and 2,801.00.

The broader all-share index fell 3.99 points to 1,743.56.

Losers led gainers 54 to 37, with 62 stocks unchanged.

Turnover was 2.23 billion shares worth P2.81 billion ($56.67 million). The peso at midday was at 49.526 to the dollar.

Ayala Land Inc. fell 25 centavos to P14.75. Philippine Long Distance Telephone was down P30 at P2,465.

DMCI was up 50 centavos at P6.20, following its successful bid for the government's 83.9 percent stake in Maynilad Water Services Inc., the firm that supplies more than half of Metro Manila's requirements.

Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s A and B shares were unchanged at P66 and P73.50 respectively.

AFP

IN THE INTEREST OF THE TRUTH

For the past two weeks, unscrupulous persons have conducted a malicious campaign to vilify me and Mekeni Food Corporation where I serve as vice president for Physical Structures and Engineering. They have used print and broadcast media to peddle outright lies and conjectures to erode the public's trust and confidence in the company. These people, whom I will unmask shortly in the proper forum, spread the lie that I use the alias "Arnold Polintan", the alleged owner of the "hot meat" smuggled from China and discovered at the Kayabe cold storage and ice plant on November 28, 2006. This is sheer dishonesty.

I have never used an alias in any business transaction. I have never done anything that would jeopardize the good name of my family nor Mekeni Food Corporation. As a professional, my actuations have always been upright and beyond reproach.

Mekeni Food Corporation supports both private and government initiatives to ensure the health and safety of the consuming public. Its recent certification as ISO 22000:2005 company underscores its adherence to international standards on Food Safety Management System. It is the first company in the Philippines and the first in Asia to receive this distinction.

The truth shall prevail.

Adrian S. Garcia
Vice President
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Balubad, Porac, Pampanga

Mekeni
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Kasama. Nakikiisa. Kabahagi.

Pen, pin and Puno's pronunciation

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IT IS A GOOD THING THAT THE SUPREME Court justices declined to appear before the Judicial and Bar Council hearings.

Not only stilettos and long knives had awaited them, the chief justice applicants would have had also exposed their regional and peculiar accents to needless public amusement.

Justice Conchita Carpio Morales herself made light of the pronounced differences Wednesday during the presentation of a Supreme Court pen, one of the many farewell tokens, to retiring Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban.

Saying Visayans pronounced "pen" as "pin" and vice versa, the lady justice herself subsequently tripped on the word, to the amusement of the diplomatic, business and legal luminaries in the packed session hall.

Later, it was a painful revelation to hear the sharp Reynato Puno, hours from becoming chief justice, suffer the same affliction that many columnists—present company included—also suffer from, as he read the bench's testimonial to their retiring colleague.

A charitable way to put it is, justices, like writers, are better read than heard.

(Unsolicited advice: Rather than summon judicial applicants to appear before a baying crowd, it makes much more sense to require the jobseekers, especially practicing lawyers, to list down the names of their clients and the cases that they have handled.)

Annulled and very much married

OOPS. Not only was Rep. Lorna Cillan-Silverio legally separated from her first husband, as this column reported Wednesday, but her first marriage has been nullified as well.

Because of the unfortunate lapse, Silverio and her counsel, Vicente Chuidian, have become the subjects of mischievous jokes from otherwise well-meaning colleagues who readily appreciated the nuances of legal separation and annulment.

To make a long story short, the now Mrs. Silverio obtained the annulment from the Quezon City Regional Trial Court in Jan. 1998, before she married now San Rafael, Bulacan Mayor Ricardo Silverio Sr. before then Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Roberto Diokno on Mar. 27, 1998.

Mistress wins Bel-Air house

AN ADMITTED mistress has just won sole ownership of a Bel-Air property of which her former lover was trying to claim co-ownership.

The Supreme Court awarded full ownership of 34 Galaxy St. to Yolanda de Castro, a former accountant of Lupo Atienza, who was president and general manager of Enrico Shipping Corporation and Eurasian Maritime Corp., who hired her in 1983.

Despite being married, Atienza shortly thereafter cohabited with De Castro and had two children with her.

After the birth of their second child, the relation turned sour until they parted ways, but not after, according to Atienza, De Castro acquired the Bel-Air house in 1987 in her name, using dollar funds allegedly drawn from Atienza's two companies.

But the court's second division gave more weight to the contract to sell, deed of assignment of redemption, deed of transfer and various other legal and banking documents submitted by, and all in the name of, De Castro, who by that time had become a foreign exchange dealer, money lender and jewelry trader.

Atienza, in the meantime, had exacted his revenge on his former mistress by filing an administrative complaint and successfully causing the dismissal from service of De Castro's lover, then Judge Francisco Brillantes Jr. of the Manila Metropolitan Trial Court in 1995.

Money-go-round

- THE chair of the Philippine Bankers Club of Hong Kong, Rolando Cruz, wrote to say the eight member-banks now operating in the Chinese colony launched their Sa Bangko, Sigurado Kayo campaign in early 2005, much ahead of the current Smart campaign.

Smart is trying to undercut the banks out of the lucrative OFW remittance business by bringing down the remittance fee to HK$1, from as high as HK$30 charged by some banks and money remittance companies.

- RESIDENTS of the Ayala-developed Montgomery Place in Quezon City are trying to stop Metrobank's Federal Land from building three residential condominiums in their neighborhood.

Heard through the grapevine

BECAUSE of taxation concerns, John Gokongwei Jr. has so far transferred only the equivalent of 0.01 percent of the half of his 27.59-percent stake in JG Summit the taipan had promised to donate to the family's charity arm, the Gokongwei Brothers Foundation.

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Gov't finalizing terms of Malampaya oil deal

By Abigail L. Ho

A GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE IS ABOUT TO finalize the terms of the bidding of the contract to extract oil from the Camago-Malampaya field off northwest Palawan.

In an interview with reporters, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla added that there were still some technical issues that needed to be ironed out to ensure that there would be no conflict between the Malampaya consortium members and the future developer of the oil reserves.

He added that the government was well aware that the Malampaya oil reserves should be extracted soon, which was why the task force was rushing the completion of the terms of reference for the bidding.

The task force is composed of members of the boards of Philippine National Oil Co. and PNOC Exploration Corp., as well as management and technical people from PNOC-EC.

The bidding rules and procedures should be in line with EO 556, an order that prevented PNOC from entering into a partnership with regard to the development of the Camago-Malampaya oil leg.

The order stated that partners of government should be chosen through a transparent and competitive bidding procedure.

Foreign borrowings lifting peso, Medalla says

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PESO IS HITTING NEW FOUR-AND-a-half-year highs partly due to significant foreign borrowings, according to former Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla.

"Borrowing in dollars will increase the supply of dollars in the local foreign-exchange market... causing the peso to strengthen more," said economic think tank Lazaro Bernardo Tiu & Associates Inc. in a research paper that quoted Medalla.

Medalla said the government should therefore look into the impact of its foreign borrowing program on the exchange rate when considering different debt management strategies.

The peso hit its four-and-a-half-year high of 49.45 to the dollar on Wednesday before closing at 49.50.

Foreign borrowings beef up a country's dollar holdings and its balance-of-payments (BOP) position.

When a surplus occurs because there are more foreign currencies - including borrowings - flowing into the country than going out, the local currency appreciates.

The appreciation of the peso to record highs has been a subject of complaints by exporters, who had said that the strong peso has adversely affected their competitiveness.

A strong peso makes Philippine-made goods more expensive in terms of dollars.

Some exporters have even asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to intervene in the exchange rate movement by buying dollars to keep the peso from appreciating too much.

Insurance firms moving out of gov't securities

THE STEEP DECLINE IN INTEREST RATES IS forcing insurance firms to reduce their investments in government securities in favor of higher-yielding issues.

"Low interest rates are good for the economy in general, but not for the insurance industry. We (insurance firms) have to be more creative in our investment activities," said Jose L. Cuisia, president and chief executive officer of Philamlife.

Cuisia, speaking during the launch of its four new insurance products yesterday, noted that insurance firms used to enjoy double-digit interest rates on their investments in Treasury bonds.

Cuisia said there was even a time when insurance firms got a yield of over 20 percent on 20-year bonds.

Insurance firms usually place a big portion of their available funds in virtually risk-free and long-term government securities, to ensure their ability to service their clients' needs.

But because of the declining interest rates, Philam is now looking at investing more money in the equities and real estate markets.

Some of its real estate assets include its office buildings on UN Avenue in Manila and Ayala Avenue in Makati City.

The rate for the 20-year T-bonds fell to only 8 percent during its latest auction last Tuesday.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the declining interest rate had to do with the government's improving fiscal condition, which means that the government has the luxury of rejecting bids that are "too high". *Michelle V. Remo*

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Bangko Sentral to raise cap on banks' dollar purchases

Bankers say unimpaired capital should be the basis

By Doris C. Dumlao

WITH STRONG FOREIGN EXchange inflows fueling the peso's rally to four-and-a-half year highs, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is considering doubling the banks' allowable dollar purchases—known as the overbought limit—to $10 million.

The present overbought limit is at $5 million.

Another option on the table is the Bankers Association of the Philippines' proposal to do away with the nominal threshold and the use of capital adequacy ratio (CAR) as basis in setting the limits, giving more leeway to banks with better balance sheets, BSP sources said.

The BSP tightened the overbought limit during the 1997 currency crisis to curb speculative attacks against the peso. The limit used to be as high as 20 percent of unimpaired capital. When the crisis started, this was tightened initially to 10 percent of unimpaired capital and later to 2.5 percent of unimpaired capital or $5 million whichever is lower, which has remained unchanged to this day.

The BSP believes there is now a need to ease these restrictions since the foreign exchange requirements of the economy has gone up.

BSP sources said the proposed doubling of the overbought limit on "long" dollar position would be accompanied by a $20- million cap on the oversold or "short" position.

Right now, there is no limit on the amount of dollars that banks can unload to the spot foreign exchange market, Philippine Dealing System.

Banking sources said the increase in the overbought limit to $10 million and the introduction of a $20-million oversold limit were on the agenda of the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board yesterday. As of press time, the board meeting was still ongoing.

In a separate interview, BAP executive director Leonilo Coronel said setting a nominal threshold, even at a higher level of $10 million, might no longer be enough especially for very large banks. He said the BAP's proposal was to set an overbought position framework that would reward banks with good balance sheets.

The higher a bank's CAR, the higher its overbought limit as a ratio of unimpaired capital should be, he said.

"We just presented them with an option but it's all up to the regulators," he said.

The peso is trading near the 49.50 to $1 levels. The daily value turnover is now hitting $400-$500 million, up from only $200-$300 million in the past years.

PAL acquiring 6 wide-bodied planes for $1.5B

By Riza T. Olchondra

FLAG-CARRIER PHILIPPINE AIRlines (PAL) said Thursday it had signed an agreement to acquire six Boeing 777-300 Extended Range (ER) aircraft from 2009 to 2012 for about $1.5 billion.

The agreement, which PAL president Jaime Bautista signed with Boeing vice president for sales Rob Laird in Honolulu last month, covers a firm order for two B777-300ER jets and 'purchase rights' for two additional units.

Separately, PAL has signed a letter of intent with GE Commercial Aviation Services for the lease of two B777-300ER aircraft.

He said the acquisition would be financed with internally-generated funds, loans and, possibly, corporate notes. For the outright purchase worth $500 million, the 15-percent downpayment of $75 million will come from PAL equity and the balance will be financed through loans, possibly from US Eximbank.

"Plans to increase its presence in long-haul destinations moved PAL to choose the more fuel-efficient Boeing 777, a two-engine jet that seats 368 passengers, over the four-engine 747 that seats 400," Bautista told reporters.

With the acquisition, PAL intends to increase its presence in the United States, to include New York and Seattle, and to revive its European and Middle East routes.

Deliveries of ordered and leased aircraft will begin in the third quarter of 2009 and will continue until 2010.

PNOC-EDC eyes 7 projects

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GEOTHERMAL POWER PRODUCer PNOC Energy Development Corp. has lined up at least seven power projects it would pursue in the coming years.

In a prospectus filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), PNOC-EDC said it expected to start operating the country's first merchant plant under a deregulated electricity industry in Negros Occidental in February. This involves the development and utilization of geothermal steam fields in Bago City, Negros Occidental and the construction of a 49-megawatt power plant.

The company will also put up a 20-MW geothermal power plant in Nasulo, Southern Negros, which will use excess steam from Palinpinon II steam field.

In Southern Leyte, PNOC-EDC plans to install two 50-MW geothermal power plants.

Other geothermal projects in the early stages of development or consideration are Southern Mindanao, Tanawon in the Bicol Region, Manito Kayabon in Albay and Dauin in Southern Negros.

PNOC-EDC is also pursuing its Northern Luzon Wind Project in Ilocos Norte.

It also has started exploring other opportunities for wind power in Northern Luzon, particularly potential sites in Ilocos Norte.

In the Visayas, the company has completed a feasibility study in Manoc-Manoc, Aklan.

PNOC-EDC is also considering the following hydroelectric power projects: Timbaban in Aklan and Catuiran in Mindoro.

PNOC-EDC expects to raise P8.3 billion from its primary offer on Dec. 13.

Megaworld offer price set

TOWNSHIP DEVELOPER Megaworld Corp. has set the price of its stock rights offer at P1.83 apiece, which will raise about P10.8 billion for the company and its shareholders.

Megaworld is offering 5.9 billion common shares to cover a 2-for-5 stock rights offer on Jan. 2-9.

In a disclosure, the company said the offer price represented a 15.14-percent discount to the 10-day average price from Nov. 23 to Dec. 7 of P2.15 a share.

Company chair Andrew Tan, according to Megaworld officials, will subscribe to P4.85 billion worth of shares to keep his 45-percent stake.

Under the terms of the offer, an eligible stockholder is entitled to subscribe to two rights shares for every five common shares held as of the Dec. 15 record date.

Megaworld plans to use the proceeds from the rights offer to fund projects in 2007 and 2008.

Of the expected proceeds, P4 billion will fund the development and construction of City Place Hotel, BPO (business process outsourcing) office buildings and retail projects in Binondo.

About P1 billion will be used for Eastwood's BPO office building and P3 billion for land banking. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 7, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.6	6,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	44.5	44.5	44	44	2,429,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	62	63	62	63	2,604,900
China Banking Corp.	700	700	700	700	2,530
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.47	7,950,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	78	79.5	78	79.5	157,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	47.5	48.5	47.5	48.5	1,094,300
Philippine National Bank	42	42	42	42	6,300
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	26.5	26.5	25	25.5	157,200
Security Bank Corp.	66	67	66	67	65,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	49.5	50	49.5	50	16,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.7	4.85	4.65	4.85	485,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30	30.5	30	30.5	3,000
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	22,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	262.5	262.5	262.5	262.5	300
Ivantage Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.46	2,164,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	52.5	52.5	51	51	461,700
First Phil Hldgs Corp	51.5	52.5	51.5	51.5	1,138,100
Manila Electric Co. A	32.5	40	32.5	36.5	1,341,600
Manila Electric Co. B	33.5	37.5	33.5	37.5	2,614,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.5	10,336,000
Petron Corp.	4.05	4.05	4	4.05	2,228,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	5,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.06	1.12	1.06	1.08	912,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	27,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	21	21	20.5	20.5	102,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41	41.5	40.5	41.5	1,021,600
Pancake House Inc.	6	6	6	6	10,000
Rfm Corp.	1	1.04	1	1.04	500,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	50,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.39	0.43	0.39	0.4	1,400,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	66	65	66	75,700
San Miguel Corp. B	73.5	73.5	72.5	73.5	63,600
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.08	2.1	2.04	2.04	487,000
Universal Robina Corp.	20	20	19.75	19.75	495,700
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.1	1.1	1.04	1.06	9,560,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3.05	3.05	3	3	478,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.6	2,595,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5	5	5	5	8,000
Republic Cement Corp.	4	4	3.95	3.95	170,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc	5	5.1	4.95	5.1	9,709,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	80,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.76	0.77	0.73	0.74	48,370,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.17	0.18	15,260,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	2,000,000
Ayala Corp.	490	490	485	487.5	76,780
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	800,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	6	6.1	6	6.1	99,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0575	0.0675	0.0575	0.0675	71,600,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.85	1,822,000
Apc Group, Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.31	5,760,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	141,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	160,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	2.28	2.28	1.98	1.98	181,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.15	11,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	283,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.68	1.74	34,052,000
Omci Holdings Inc.	5.9	6.4	5.9	6.2	21,869,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.45	2,955,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	784,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	9.3	9.3	8.9	9.3	157,000
Medco Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	4.3	4.9	4.3	4.65	4,436,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.64	1.72	1.62	1.66	1,921,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	200,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	50,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	1,280,000
Sm Investments Corp.	292.5	292.5	280	290	355,770
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	25,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	4,500,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	30,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.75	25,551,100
Belle Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.12	3,877,000
A Brown Company, Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.76	1.76	2,757,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,500,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.15	3.05	3.1	1,057,000
C & P Homes, Inc.	1.4	1.46	1.4	1.44	62,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	4,850,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.54	0.52	0.54	17,710,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	735,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	2,600,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.7	1.72	6,495,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	10,000
Interport Res.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	230,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	1,720,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	210,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	7,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.22	2.24	2.2	2.22	160,239,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	10,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.25	13,237,100
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.7	0.72	0.69	0.69	23,220,000
Sm Development Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.32	2.34	1,381,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.9	12,082,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.57	180,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	119,300
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.64	1.64	1.6	1.62	9,605,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1260	1260	1250	1255	20,390
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	5.9	6	5.8	5.9	2,046,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2490	2490	2445	2465	43,420
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	5,510,000
Imperial Res.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	200,000
Ionics Inc.	2.02	2.02	2	2	437,000
Ipvg Corp.	3.85	4.25	3.8	4.25	4,426,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	6,100,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	20,000
Transpacific Broadband	5.4	5.5	5	5.4	391,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	76,900,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	70,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.14	1.2	1.14	1.2	107,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.5	42,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	10,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.2	2.24	4,954,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	4,100,000
Philippine Racing Club	3	3	3	3	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.58	1,390,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	25,000
Ipeople Inc	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.9	67,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3	3	3	3	1,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.12	2.24	2.12	2.22	867,000
Paxys Inc.	17.75	18.25	17.75	18.25	162,700
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	5,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	553,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	31,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	329,400,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8	8	8	8	6,460,000
Benguet Corp. A	9	9	9	9	7,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	19,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	3,060,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	6,390,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	224,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	12,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	606,200,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.15	4.3	4.15	4.25	6,905,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	20.25	20.25	20	20	147,900
Vulcan Ind'l	0.9	0.91	0.89	0.91	4,050,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	410,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	43,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	3,200,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.98	0.98	0.95	0.95	310,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10	10	10	10	86,000

CURRENCIES

December 7, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.752276	1.000000	49.5200
Japan	Yen	0.006528	0.008678	0.4297
United Kingdom	Pound	1.479726	1.967000	97.4058
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.096819	0.128702	6.3733
Switzerland	Franc	0.629203	0.836400	41.4185
Canada	Dollar	0.655464	0.871308	43.1472
Singapore	Dollar	0.488650	0.649562	32.1663
Australia	Dollar	0.592577	0.787712	39.0075
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.995532	2.652661	131.3598
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.200607	0.266667	13.2053
Brunei	Dollar	0.487068	0.647459	32.0622
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021101	0.028050	1.3890
UAE	Dirham	0.204840	0.272294	13.4840
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.329300	65.8269
Korea	Won	0.000821	0.001092	0.0541
China	Yuan**	0.096157	0.127822	6.3297
Argentina	Peso	0.246244	0.327332	16.2095
Brazil	Real	0.350548	0.465983	23.0755
Denmark	Kroner	0.134126	0.178294	8.8291
India	Rupee	0.016868	0.022422	1.1103
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212088	0.281928	13.9611
Mexico	New Peso	0.069404	0.092259	4.5687
New Zealand	Dollar	0.514411	0.683807	33.8621
Norway	Kroner	0.123253	0.163840	8.1134
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012363	0.016434	0.8138
South Africa	Rand	0.106284	0.141283	6.9963
Sweden	Kroner	0.110269	0.146580	7.2586
Syria	Pound	0.014492	0.019264	0.9540
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023279	0.030945	1.5324
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000351	0.000466	0.0231

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—Dec. 6, 2006
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen
** Asian Time Closing Rate as of 06-Dec-06

Go Rotary!
Go Negosyo!

Special Panelists include:

Morning Forum (8:30-10:30 am)
Richie Cuna (Association of Filipino Franchisers)
Emelina Lopez (Bureau of Animal Industy)
Joy Alvina (Small Business Guarantee & Finance Corporation)
Anthony Inocencio (A.P. Inocencio Farms)
Kathryn Carag (Smart Bro)
Ramon Lopez (Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship)

Afternoon Forum (1:00-2:00 pm)
Joey Concepcion
Socorro Ramos (National Book Store)
Vivienne Tan (Entrepreneurs School of Asia)
Paolo Bediones (i/Tech.ph)
Gov. Rafael "Butch" Francisco (Rotary International District 3830)
Gov. Elect Renato "Ato" Magadia (Rotary International District 3830)
Gov. Nominee Edgardo "Ed" Limon (Rotary International District 3830)

Forum will be moderated by Cito Beltran.
Tara na! Let's go Rotary, let's GoNegosyo!

Go Rotary! GoNegosyo! Forum
Dec. 8, 2006 at the Manila Hotel

NEGOSYO

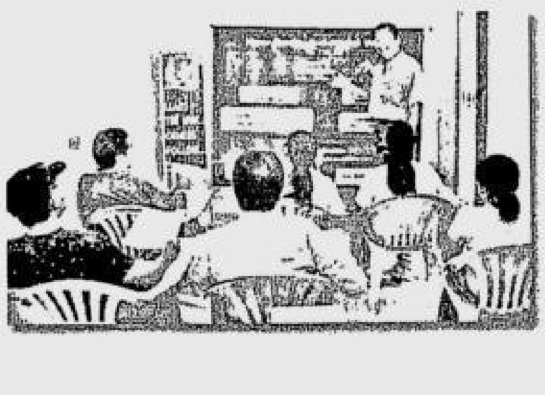
Para sa karagdagang kaalaman tumawag sa PCE Secreteriat sa (02) 637-9229 or 631-8101 loc. 7187. Maari ring mag-text sa 0918-6417768 at mag-email sa gonegosyo@yahoo.com o mag log-in na sa www.gonegosyo.org
Huwag din kalimutan panoorin ang GoNegosyo tuwing Lunes sa RPN 9, 10:30 -11:30 PM.

Sugod na sa Flying V BioFuel Center!

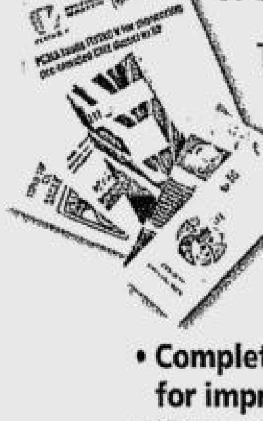
PRIME
BIODIESEL Premium
STOP ENGINE
GAS
93
Valvoline
FLYING V

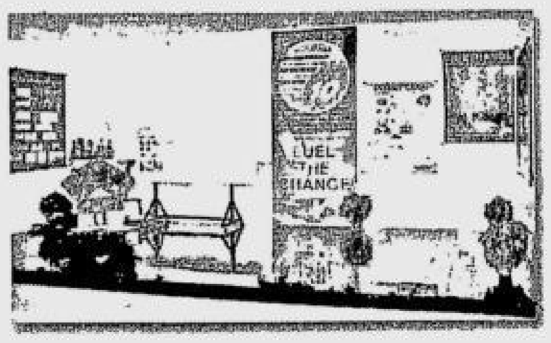
Now, load up on BioDiesel Premium and be informed on Alternative Fuels as well.

Strategically located at the corner of the Elliptical Road and Commonwealth Avenue, the Flying V Biofuel Center, in partnership with the Phil. Coconut Administration Employees Cooperative, leads the way to full acceptance of Alternative Fuels with the passing of the BioFuels Act of 2006 into law.



The Flying V BioFuel Center will be a vital venue for disseminating information on the technology and benefits of Alternative Fuels such as Ethanol, CME BioDiesel, and Auto LPG thru exhibits, displays and seminars, supported by its partner advocates: **CHEMREZ, Inc., the Sustainable Energy Development Program, Fuels for Life, and Clean Cities Coalitions of the USDOE and USAID.**



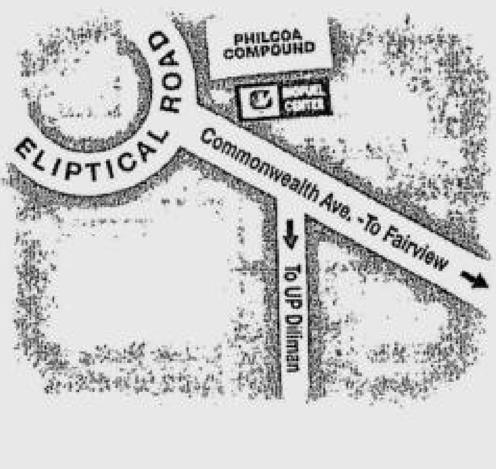

FUEL THE CHANCE

The benefits of BioDiesel blend dispensed at the Center's pumps have been well tested and proven here and in Thailand, Germany and Japan:

- **Completely cleans and lubricates - for improved performance!**
- **More complete combustion - for vastly improved mileage!**
- **Reduced exhaust emission - for cleaner air and healthier environment!**

BioDiesel use lessens dependence on fossil fuels while saving precious foreign exchange.

The inauguration of its BioFuel Center marks Flying V's commitment to energy from Alternative Fuels, a fitting highlight of National Energy Week. ***Sugod na!***


PHILCOA COMPOUND
ELIPTICAL ROAD
Commonwealth Ave. -To Fairview
To UP Diliman

FLYING V

LEADING THE WAY in Bio Fuels.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
WSP WEB SOLUTIONS PHILIPPINES, INC. U-1217 City & Land Mega Plaza, ADB Ave. cor. Garnet Rd. Ortigas Ctr., Ortigas, Pasig City	Ki Seop Park	Sales Executive
SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS PHILIPPINES CORPORATION G/F, Bonaventure Bldg., Ortigas Ave. Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila	Bong Wan Kim	Information Technology Team Supervisor/Vice President
CONNECT88 INC. 28/F, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Kun Shao	Technical Staff
CHINATRUST (PHILS.) COMMERCIAL BANK CORPORATION 3/F, Tower One & Exchange Plaza Ayala Ave., cor. Paseo de Roxas Makati City	Vibhooti Chaturvedi	Consultant
TORN YANG PHILS., INC. Whse. 8, Armal Realty Cmpd. C., Maybunga, Pasig City	Fu-Tang Liu	General Manager
PARK HEE SUP CORP. U-7E One Beverly Plaza Condo. 35 Annapolis St., Greenhills San Juan, M.M.	Heesup Park	Treasurer
SUNSTAR PRIME ENTERPRISE INC. 1148 Chino Roces Ave., San Antonio Village, Makati City	Yasuhiro Nasuno	Managing Director
AMBAK CONSULTANCY & GEN. SERVICES CORP. UG-22 City & Land Mega Plaza ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City	Kum Ja Jang (w/o Kim)	Office Consultant
HAEPI INT'L.-EDU FOUNDATION INC. Unit 1407 Landsdale Tower Condominium 86 Mo. Ignacia St., Quezon City	Geun Yeong You	Liaison Officer
HAEPI INT'L.-EDU FOUNDATION INC. Unit 1407 Landsdale Tower Condominium 86 Mo. Ignacia St., Quezon City	Hyungdong Kim	Liaison Officer
ROADMAIN SYSTEMS INC. U309 Prestige Tower, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Hee Jeong Jo (w/o Yoon)	Marketing Director
AEROK INTERNATIONAL CORP. (EMULE INTERNET CAFE) 8463 Kalayaan Ave., Poblacion Makati City	Ji Won Suh (w/o Lee)	General Manager
CHEPOR MINING AND TRADING, INC. 29/F Unit B Chatham House, 116 Valero St. cor. V.A. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Ching-Kai Wang	Marketing Manager
CHEPOR MINING AND TRADING, INC. 29/F Unit B Chatham House, 116 Valero St. cor. V.A. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Ping-Yeh Lin	Manager-Import and Export Division
CHEPOR MINING AND TRADING, INC. 29/F Unit B Chatham House, 116 Valero St. cor. V.A. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Yao-Hsing Huang	Supervisor

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Dec. 8, 2006)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

7CB-GSC-002

PURCHASE OF VARIOUS OFFICE SUPPLIES

(Name of Project)

514 items of different various office supplies
(pls. see details @ **www.gensantos.gov.ph**)

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City, through CY 2007 Annual Budget intends to apply the sum of **Two Million Five Hundred Fifty Three Thousand One Hundred Two and 72/100 (P2,553,102.72)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Purchase of Various Office Supplies. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Purchase Of Various Office Supplies. Delivery of GOODS is required by **30 calendar days.** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsive of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **P1,000.00** to the City Treasurer's Office. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative

The Local Government Unit of General Santos will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested **on December 14, 2006, 8:30 o'clock** in the morning at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 o'clock in the morning of December 28, 2006.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit equivalent to One Percent (1%) of ABC or Bank Guarantee equivalent to One and a half Percent (1 ½ %) of ABC or Surety Bond equivalent to Two and a half Percent (2 ½ %) of ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be at **10:00 o'clock in the morning of December 28, 2006** at the **BAC office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' represantatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liabity to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee
Gina Y. Pigar
2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083) 301-0553, (083) 302-7210
Fax: (083) 301-0553
Website address: www.gensantos.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **NAEL JOSEPH D. CRUSPERO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 8, 2006)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

7CB-GSC-001

PRINTING AND BINDING SERVICES

(Name of Project)

73 items of different Printing and Binding Services
(pls. see details @ **www.gensantos.gov.ph**)

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City, through the CY 2007 Annual Budget intends to apply the sum of **Two Million Three Hundred Forty Six Thousand Three Hundred Forty Six Pesos (P2,346,346.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Printing and Binding Services. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Printing and Binding Services. Delivery of the GOODS is required by **30 calendar days**. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsive of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **P1,000.00** to the City Treasurer's Office. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested **on December 14, 2006, 8:30 o'clock** in the morning at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 o'clock in the morning of December 28, 2006.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit equivalent to One Percent (1%) of ABC or Bank Guarantee equivalent to One and a half Percent (1 ½%) of ABC or Surety Bond equivalent to Two and a half Percent (2 ½%) of ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be at **10:00 o'clock in the morning of December 28, 2006** at the **BAC office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee
Gina Y. Pigar
2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083) 301-0553, (083) 302-7210
Fax: (083) 301-0553
Website address: www.gensantos.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **NAEL JOSEPH D. CRUSPERO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 8, 2006)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	Supply and delivery of 3 units Van to various BSP Regional Offices (Cebu, Davao and La Union), per BSP specifications
Approved Budget for the Contract	P4,050,000.00
Delivery Period	Within sixty (60) calendar days after receipt of the approved contract

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	8 Dec. 2006-4 Jan. 2007, up to 2:00 P.M.)
2. Pre-Bid Conference	5 January 2007, 11:00 A.M.
3. Opening of Bids	23 January 2007, 2:00 P.M.
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,025.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI–Dec. 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
PCA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 929-9597, 929-8074, 929-5847

INVITATION TO APPY ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Agriculture invites bona fide suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITEMS TO BID:

1	**lot Server**
2	**units Laptop**

The Bid documents shall be available at the BFAR Property Section starting **December 14-18, 2006** upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of P500.00.

Eligibility documents, technical and financial proposals in three envelopes must be submitted at the BFAR-BAC Secretariat, PCA Compound, Diliman, Quezon City not later than 10:00 a.m. on December 27, 2006 and shall be opened at the Office of the BFAR-BAC Chairman, 3rd Flr. PCA, Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City, on the same date in the presence of the participating bidders.

For more information, please call the BAC-Secretariat at Tel. No. 426-3168.

BFAR reserves the right to waive any formality in the response to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. BFAR further reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.**
Director

(PDI - Dec. 8, 2006)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

6CB-GSC-218

VARIOUS MATERIALS FOR FLOOD CONTROL

(Name of Project)

5 items of different Various materials for Flood Control
(pls. see details @ **www.gensantos.gov.ph**)

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City, through the CY 2006 Annual Budget intends to apply the sum of **Two Million Six Hundred Sixty Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty Pesos (P2,668,860.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Various Materials for Flood Control. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Various Materials for Flood Control. Delivery of the GOODS is required by **30 calendar days.** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsive of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8.00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **P1,000.00** to the City Treasurer's Office. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested **on December 14, 2006, 8:30 o'clock** in the morning at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 o'clock in the morning of December 28, 2006.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit equivalent to One Percent (1%) of ABC or Bank Guarantee equivalent to One and a half Percent (1 ½ %) of ABC or Surety Bond equivalent to Two and a half Percent (2 ½ %) of ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be at **10:00 o'clock in the morning of December 28, 2006** at the **BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee
Gina Y. Pigar
2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083) 301-0553, (083) 302-7210
Fax: (083) 301-0553
Website address: www.gensantos.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **NAEL JOSEPH D. CRUSPERO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Center for Health Development – X
NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER
Capitol Compound, Cagayan de Oro City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER (NMMC), through the General Appropriations Act 2006 intends to apply the sum of **Five Million Nine Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php5,950,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the Contract for MINI DUMP TRUCK and the proposed installation of SPRINKLER SYSTEM, WET TYPE. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The NMMC now invites Bids from eligible bidders for Mini Dump Truck and the proposed installation of Sprinkler System, Wet Type. Delivery of the GOODS is required by January 15, 2007. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Northern Mindanao Medical Center and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos (Php2,000.00). The method of payment will be through Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative

The NMMC will hold a Pre-Bid conference open to all interested parties on **December 15, 2006 – 2:00 PM** at NMMC Auditorium.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 9:00 AM of December 27, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of Cash, Cashier's or Certified check; or irrevocable Letter of Credit in the amount of Fifty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php59,500.00); or Bank Guarantee in the amount of Eighty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Pesos (Php89,250.00); or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **December 27, 2006, 9:00 AM** at NMMC Auditorium. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

NORTHERN MINDANAO MEDICAL CENTER
JOSE C. CHAN, MD
Capitol Compound
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. 08822-726362
Fax Number 08822-721794

(Sgd.) **JOSE C. CHAN, MD**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–December 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
MANILA

INVITATION TO RE-BID

The Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital invites interested bidders for the re-bid of:

	ABC
MEDICAL LIQUID OQYGEN Including Vacuum Insulated Evaporator (64,615.38 cu. m.)	P 3,360,000.00
MEDICAL GASES	4,318,708.00
LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (7,000 kgs.)	378,000.00

Bid documents may be secured at the BAC Secretariat Administrative Office. For details, please contact telephone no. 735-7144.

The bids will be opened on **December 22, 2006**, 10:00 a.m. at the DJFMH Reception Hall.

The DJFMH reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality found therein and to accept such bids as may considered advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ELISEA S. MARQUEZ, M.D., D.P.B.A**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Dec. 8 & 15, 2006)

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Office of the President

BCDA

Bases Conversion and Development Authority

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

RE-BIDDING OF CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE QUANTITY SURVEY OF THE SUBIC-CLARK-TARLAC EXPRESSWAY PROJECT

1. The ***Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA)*** through *its Approved Supplemental Budget* intends to apply the sum of ***Pesos: Sixteen Million Nine Hundred Twenty Eight Thousand Eighty (P16,928,080.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the ***Consulting Services for Quantity Survey for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project*** (hereafter refered to as **"Contract"**). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.
2. The ***Bases Conversion and Development Authority*** now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and shortlisting for the ***Re-bidding of Consulting Services for Quantity Survey for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project.*** Interested consultants must submit their LOIs on ***December 11-21, 2006, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm*** at the ***Bases Conversion and Development Authority, 2nd Floor Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City*** and secure the Eligibility Documents therefrom upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***Pesos: Two Thousand only (P2,000.00).*** Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents: ***04 January, 2007, 12noon*** at the ***Bases Conversion and Development Authority, 2nd Floor Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City.*** Proponents are invited to witness the opening of the Eligibility Documents on ***04 January 2007, 1:30pm.*** at the ***BCDA office.*** Only those that are shortlisted will be entitled to submit bids.
3. The BAC shall draw up the shortlist of consultants from those who have submitted *LOIs* and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The shortlist of prospective bidders shall be *at the most five (5) pre-qualified consultants.* The criteria and rating system for shortlisting prospective bidders are:
   - a. *Consulting firm must have at least five (5) years experience in quantity survey;*
   - b. *Applicable experience of the consulting firm and its associates (in case of joint ventures), considering both the overall experience of the firm and the individual experiences of its key staff;*
   - c. *Qualification of personnel to be assigned to the Project vis-à-vis the job to be undertaken;*
   - d. *Current undertakings of the prospective bidder relative to its capacity to carry out its workload; and*
   - e. *Most favorable compliance of the criteria stated above.*
4. *Letters of Intent (LOIs)* must be delivered by hand, through mail, or facsimile to the address below on ***December 11-21, 2006.*** **In addition to the LOIs, a proof of registration with the Department of Budget and Management – Government Electronic Procurement System (DBM-GEPS) is required to secure Eligibility Documents.**
5. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A 9184, only bids from shortlisted consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   BCDA shall evaluate bids using the ***Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (QCBE)*** procedure. BCDA shall weigh the ***Technical Proposals as seventy percent (70%) and the Financial Proposals as thirty percent (30%).*** The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
6. Interested consultants may obtain further information from *BCDA* at the address given below from Monday to Friday, *8:00 am to 5:00 pm.*
7. The contract shall be completed in twelve ***months (12) months.***
8. **All firms which have been, or are currently involved or are associated with the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project directly or indirectly, whether it be with BCDA or another government agency, in the design, construction supervision, certification or construction of civil works are disqualified from participating in the bidding of this Contract.**
9. The BCDA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Bases Conversion and Development Authority

VICTOR V. ZABLAN
Chairman, Special Bids and Award Committee for SCTEP (SBAC)
Bases Conversion and Development Authority, 2nd Floor Bonifacio Technology Center,
Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City 1634
Tel. 816-6666 loc.110
Website Address: www.bcda.gov.ph

(Sgd.) VICTOR V. ZABLAN
SBAC Chairman

(PDI--Dec. 8, 2006)

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dti

DEPARTMENT OF
TRADE & INDUSTRY
PHILIPPINES

Department Administrative Order No. 12
Series of 2006

Subject : Further Amendments to Certain Provisions of Department of Trade Administrative Order No. 80, Series of 1982 as Amended

WHEREAS, Act 3883 (Business Name Law) as amended, mandates the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to regulate the registration and use in business transactions of names other than true names, prescribes the duties of the Director of Bureau of Commerce (now Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection) in its enforcement, and provides penalties for its violation, among others;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 428 issued on 18 May 2005, directs departments, Bureaus, Offices and other Agencies in the Executive Branch, including Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations to simplify rules and regulations and reduce reportorial requirements to facilitate doing business and encourage more investments in the country;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 557 issued on 08 August 2006, establishes an Anti-Red Tape Task Force chaired by the DTI Secretary, aimed to streamline government processes and reduce the cost of doing business in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, in consonance with the objectives of Executive Order Nos. 428 and 557, there is a need to simplify the process and documentary requirements set forth in Department of Trade Administrative Order (DTAO) No. 80 series of 1982, implementing Act 3883 as amended;

NOW WHEREFORE, IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, the following ORDER is hereby prescribed and promulgated for the information, guidance and compliance of all concerned:

Section 1. Section 6 (a), Rule II of DTAO No. 80 series of 1982 as amended by Sec. 3 of DAO No. 15 series of 1990 requiring the submission of two (2) passport-size pictures of the applicant is hereby deleted.

Section 2. Section 12 of DTAO No. 80 series of 1982 as amended by Section 5 of DAO 15 series of 1990 is hereby further amended, to read as follows:

> *"Any person, whether natural or juridical, whose firm name or business name had expired and failed to renew the same within six months from its expiration date, shall automatically be cancelled from the record."*

Section 3. This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Issued this 4th day of December 2006 in Makati City, Philippines.

APPROVED:

(Sgd.) **PETER B. FAVILA**
Secretary
Department of Trade and Industry

RECOMMENDED BY:

(Sgd.) **ZENAIDA CUISON MAGLAYA**
Undersecretary, Consumer Welfare
and Trade Regulations Group

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
Director, Bureau of Trade Regulation
and Consumer Protection

(PDI–Dec. 8, 2006)

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Innovative St. Subic Bay, Industrial Park SBFZ.
Cell # : 0920 - 9544086
Tel Nos. 249 - 1818 / 682 -2858
0922-8160417 / 0916-2069813
0918-5886075

AHS Class '71 Christmas party

AHS CLASS '71 INTL (N.O.N.I.) GROUP WILL HAVE a Christmas party on Saturday, 16 Dec. 2006, 4:00 P.M. at the Basketball Court Topland Subd., Sucat Paranaque. For details, please call Susan Pasia – 927-4245 loc. 4101; Weng Perote – 825-9593; Bessie Camacho-de Guzman - 632-6031; Beth Andres – 897-8808 loc. 502.

CAGELCO II

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The **CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (CAGELCO II)** is inviting all interested contractors to pre-qualify and to bid for the **SUPPLY OF MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION OF A 69 KV SUB-TRANSMISSION LINE FROM LUCBAN, ABULUG TO CENTRO, SANCHEZ MIRA WITH A TOTAL LENGTH OF 37.5 KMS.**

The 69KV Sub-transmission line will utilize 73.3 ft. pre-stressed rectangular I Section Concrete Pole.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures. Interested bidders shall comply with Accreditation Requirements (for submission to the Accreditation Committee Chairman, Clarence E. Jacinto) as follows:

- a. Company Profile
- b. Business Registration
- c. Business Permit
- d. BIR/VAT Certificate
- e. Latest Income Tax Return (ITR)
- f. List of Clients for a period of three (3) years
- g. Financial Statement

And must be able to pay Php 10,000.00 (for this particular bidding only and not refundable) for bid documents during the pre-bid conference.

Schedule of activities are as follows:

BIDDING SCHEDULE	
Release of Invitation to Bid (two publications)	December 7 and 8, 2006
Intent to Respond Forms Due	December 14, 2006
Accreditation Period	December 15 to 24, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference	January 04, 2007
Conduct of Public Bidding	January 15, 2007

CAGELCO II reserves the right to reject any/or all bid without any reason, waive any formality therein, accepts proposal most advantageous to the cooperative and assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify any bidder for expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **BLANDINA Y. MADAMBA**
ISD Manager/PBAC Chairman

Noted by: **GABRIEL A. TORDESILLAS**
General Manager

CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Macanaya District, Aparri, Cagayan
Tel No (078) 888-2173 • Telefax No (078) 888-2940
E-mail cagelco2main@digitelone.com
Website www.cagelco2.org.ph

(PDI - Dec. 7 & 8, 2006)

Japanese gov't donates rice to Reming victims

THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN AGAIN manifests its support to the Philippines through its donation of some 5,934 bags of 30 kilograms or 178 metric tons of rice for relief assistance to the victims of super typhoon Reming in the provinces of Regions 4 and 5.

The rice will be released to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) through the facility of the East Asia Emergency Rice Reserve (EAERR) program. The rice stocks are currently stored in the National Food Authority warehouses ready for withdrawal by authorized officials of DSWD.

The donation is in response to an earlier DSWD request for the NFA to release the rice under the EAERR program for the emergency needs of typhoon victims. The rice will be shipped to the provinces of Marinduque in Region IV-B and in Albay, Catanduanes and Camarines Sur in the Bicol region. The rice for the typhoon affected provinces is part of a total of 952.46 metric tons or 31,749 bags of 30 kg rice which the Japanese Government-Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries has donated through the EAERR for poverty alleviation and food relief operations.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has declared a national calamity and has called for international assistance in the wake of massive destruction wrought by typhoon Reming.

The rice dispersal for relief operation is being implemented jointly by the NFA and the DSWD. The NFA is tasked to undertake the acceptance, storage and release of the said rice donation to calamity victims while the DSWD spearhead its distribution to the identified beneficiaries.

For more information on rice relief assistance, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program with mobile number 0917-6210927.

OBITUARIES

> *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."*
> *John 11:25-26*

Our dearly beloved

Severina Cuerpo Vedar

"Mama Vering"

of Silang, Cavite

peacefully joined our Creator on Nov. 6, 2006 at the age of 87.

Her sisters, Milagros, Enriqueta, Sr. Salve, icm; nephew, Bert; nieces, Sr. Tita, icm, Edith and Ting; grandnieces & grandnephews, great-grandnieces & great-grandnephews & other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her loving soul.

Her remains lie in state at Funeraria Vedar, Silang, Cavite.
Interment will be announced later.

> **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."**
> John 3:16

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Gone... but eternally loved & never forgotten.

Nonoy, Rorie and **Nikolai Buncio**
relatives and friends remember

Deanna R. Buncio

on her 3rd year of eternal life

Masses for her eternal happiness are offered today, December 8, 2006 at the following churches:

Immaculate Conception Cathedral Parish *Lantana St., Cubao, Q.C.*	7:15 AM 8:30 AM 9:15 AM 11:00 AM	4:45 PM 6:00 PM 7:15 PM
Christ the King *E. Rodriguez Avenue, Q.C.*	7:00 AM	6:00 PM
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene *Quiapo, Manila*	6:00 AM	4:00 PM 8:00 PM
Mount Carmel Shrine *New Manila, Q.C.*	6:00 AM 7:00 AM 8:00 AM 9:00 AM	6:00 PM 7:30 PM
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice *U.P., Diliman, Q.C.*	6:00 AM	12:00 NN 6:00 PM
Queen of Victory, Pope Pious X *Canon Road, Q.C.*	6:00 AM	
Sta. Maria della Strada *Katipunan Road, Q.C.*	6:00 AM 6:00 PM	12:00 NN
St. Paul the Apostle Church *Chino Hills, CA, USA*	7:00 AM	

BUSINESS

CIIF to go into biodiesel production next year

Biofuels law opens local mart, CEO says

By Christine A. Gaylican

STATE-OWNED COCONUT INDUSTRY INvestment Fund (CIIF) Group plans to set aside some 200,000 metric tons of its current coconut oil production to meet the growing demand for biodiesel, a company executive said.

CIIF Group president and CEO Danilo Coronacion said it would be more viable for the company to divert some of its export volume to meet the domestic market needs considering the recent passage of the law requiring the use of biodiesel.

Coronacion said the Biofuels law opened new opportunities for local vegetable oil milling companies, which was timely considering the expected increase next year in freight costs, making exporting more expensive.

CIIF is the country's biggest exporter of coconut oil, accounting for 35 percent of the export volume of 1 million metric tons a year.

CIIF owns five companies engaged in coconut oil milling/refining: Legaspi Oil Company, Inc. San Pablo Manufacturing Corp., Cagayan de Oro Oil Co., Inc. Southern Luzon Coconut Oil Mill Inc. and Granexport Manufacturing Corp.

These plants have a combined crushing capacity of 750,000 metric tons of copra, and a refining capacity of 280,500 metric tons of different grades of processed coconut oils.

He said, however, that the millers were faced with the problem of declining production, which was exacerbated by typhoons on coconut-producing provinces in southern Luzon.

Domestic copra production this year could reach only 2.14 million metric tons, 14 percent below target.

"To say we can make a recovery in six months is being optimistic, it could take as long as two years," Coronacion said in a briefing yesterday.

But despite the reduced copra output, the country's coconut oil exports this year could match last year's level of 1 million tons, only because of supply carried over from the previous year, he said.

In the international market, coconut prices next year could rise to as much as $700 a ton, Coronacion said.

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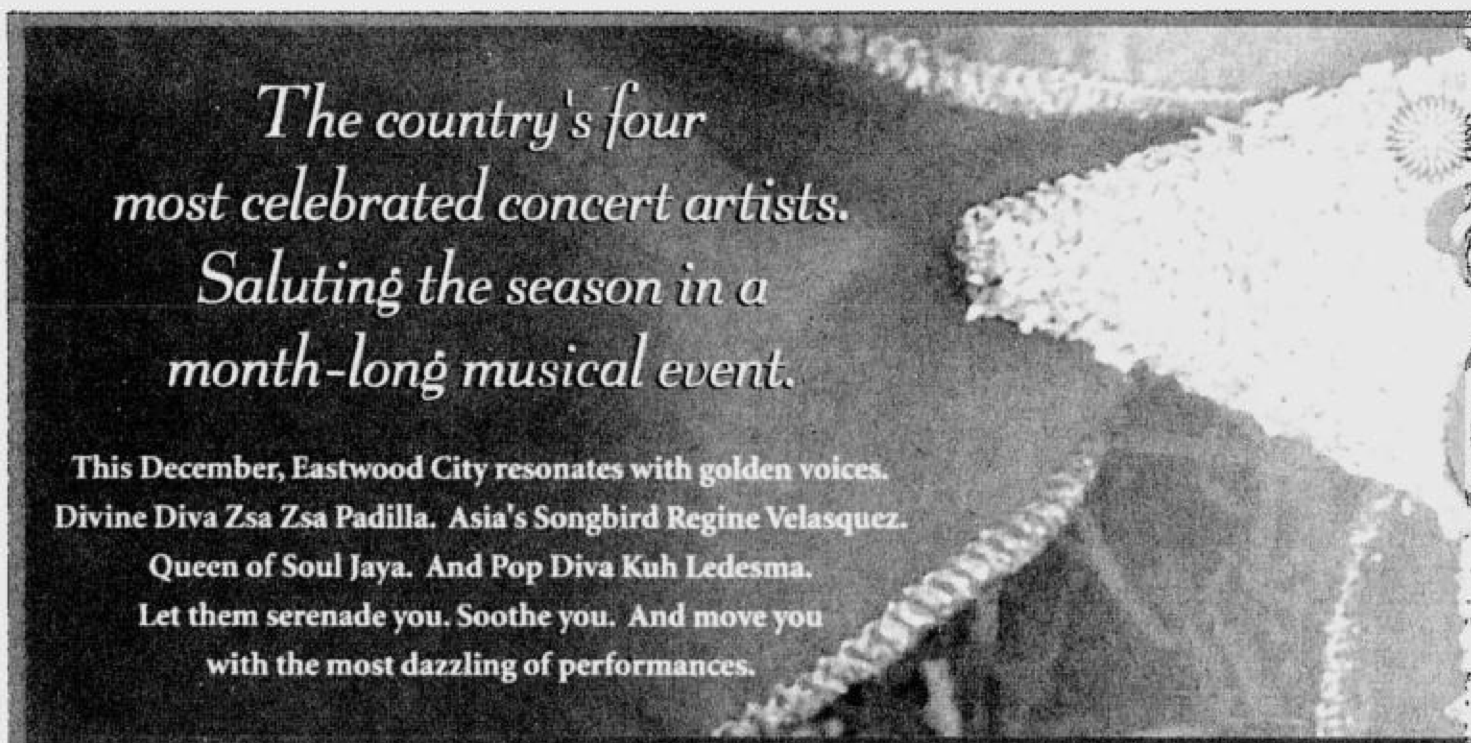

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BUSINESS Friday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Marketing to the modern men

Cleanliness, customer service, slayout influence men's shopping

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

TODAY'S RENAISSANCE male shops more than the men in his father's generation both in quantity and variety, is more visible in grocery and shopping areas and is relatively meticulous about the quality of customer service and experience. Yet, while he is a bit more consumptive and slightly self-indulgent, he is definitely not the narcissistic shop-aholic metrosexual or the old guard who believes that shopping is entirely a female act. Unlike them, he is both pragmatic and utilitarian or functional in his shopping preference, ways and habits.

Shopping is not second nature to the modern male. Borne out of lifestyle changes i.e. rising number of single households (men are marrying later or preferring single-blessedness and often living alone thus, they have to do shopping by themselves), shared couple responsibilities (dual working parent households divide shopping tasks), increasing number of male single parent households (either separated or wife is working overseas); men today more than ever have to take to shopping for themselves or their families. Because of this new consumer behavior, brands and shopping areas have to seriously look at this segment no longer as a passive market but as an active buyer.

A 2005 male shopper study mounted by Lee, Ibrahim and Shan among male Asian shoppers ages 20 to 35 years old reveal a number of shopping attributes that influence the modern man's level of shopping enjoyment. These include cleanliness, high-quality customer service, good product knowledge of sales personnel, a friendly design layout, wide and unique tenant mix, pleasant ambience including proper lighting, avail-

MARKETING/ B2-2

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

"Night or day, I can call any branch of Gerry's Grill including one in Union City, California.

Buti na lang the lines are clear for local and IDD calls kasi ang O.C. ko when I check on operations."

Sonia V. Reducindo
Director of Operations
Gerry's Grill

Sonia checks on 21 branches anytime. And she can stay on her Sun phone extensively monitoring stock inventory and nerve-wracking set-ups for emergency banquets. In one case, a very demanding client ordered dinner for 100 heads in an hour's notice. The rush 7-course meal turned out to be a huge success. All coordination was done by phone since everyone in Sonia's team is equipped with Sun phones. Sun works well for this iron lady and her iron chefs.

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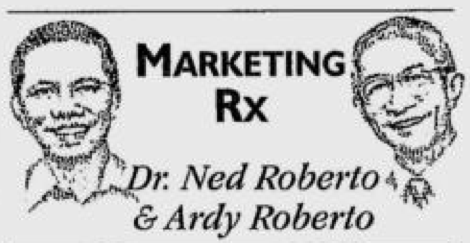
'Can we do competitive intelligence that does not cross the line of what's ethically correct?'



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Q: OUR HEAD OFFICE IN THE US HAD just reorganized our marketing research department to direct its focus on competition. It's now been renamed "Competitive Intelligence Department."

Our head office's CIS (Competitive Intelligence System) that we've been asked to install was developed by an ex-military. Some of its techniques for uncovering and monitoring competition are treading along the thin line separating what's ethical from the unethical.

Also, the system has a whole lot of competitive information that it's asking us to gather on a periodic or continuing basis. Those information fall under five categories: (1) the competitors' capability and track record to develop new products and to innovate; (2) their capability to manufacture and bring new production capacity online; (3) their capability to market, to command a strong channel support and point of sales presence; (4) their capability to finance and to shift budgets among brands and market segments; and (5) their capability to manage and retain key managers.

There are over three dozen items under these five categories and with just one product line, we have 5-8 major competitors! We don't know if we can adequately set up for the required intelligence requirements. But our CIS model says these data are necessary for us to be able to anticipate competitors' future strategies.

We have two questions. First, what ethically acceptable competitive intelligence method can you suggest that will give us just as helpful a set of competitive knowledge? Second, does your method include a way for us to short list the vast number of competitive data our CIS requires for us to be able to predict a competitor's future strategy?

A: On your first question, here's that ethically acceptable competitive intelligence method.

We call it "The Survey Based Competitive Benchmarking Study." Its complete research details are in the senior MRx-er's third edition book, "User Friendly Marketing Research." For answering your question, it's enough to limit ourselves to the logic of the method and to an example of the results of its application so that we can appreciate its power at insighting competitor behavior and strategy.

The model does its competitive intelligence function along two related logics: a "behavioral logic," and an "analytic logic." Its basic behavioral premise states that everything that your brand does versus its competitors gets registered with the target consumers. For example, consider the case of your ethical marketing of a medication to doctors. Your brand's marketing campaign consists of its ethical prescription and ethical OTC promotion activities versus those of your brand's competitors. The target response of your brand's campaign is its target doctors' prescription behavior. To what extent the promo activities of your brand's campaign has succeeded in generating doctors' prescriptions can be gauged from the data on how doctors rate those promo activities against their priorities and against competitors' promo activities. Those data are forthcoming from an MD survey.

The analysis of those data follows the logic of a simple functional equation. The equation simply states that a leader brand's share of doctors' prescriptions is a function of superior ethical prescription and ethical OTC promo activities and inputs. The analysis' "benchmarking" framework directs a focus of the data analysis. That's on "best practice" or the "best practicing brand" which is the market leader brand.

The example we used to illustrate the model's behavioral and analytic logics involved the four competing brands in the NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory disease) category. These brands were Feldene, Mobic, Orudis and Ponstan.

In terms of shares of prescriptions (SORx), the survey pointed to Mobic as having the highest SORx and therefore the market leader. Ponstan was No. 2 while Feldene was No. 3. Orudis was the fourth ranking brand in SORx.

How did the market leader brand, Mobic, attain the "benchmark" position in the category?

To answer this, the survey based competitive benchmarking study gathered two sets of data: (1) how the prescribing doctors prioritized 16 ethical prescription promo activities in terms of how doctors regarded each of these activities as necessary for a pharma company to do to gain their prescription, and (2) which NSAID brand these same doctors regarded as doing the best or the most among the doctors' prioritized promo activities.

The survey identified nine out of 16 as the doctors' priority ethical promo activities. Doctors rated Mobic, the market leader brand, as statistically significantly superior over its competitors on only four out of the nine. These were on the promo activities of: (1) doing the most regular visits to doctors, (2) doing the most frequent detailing, (3) doing the most product sampling, and (4) doing the best doctor PR.

What do these results say about how to succeed or gain the highest market share in the NSAID category at the time this survey based competitive benchmarking study was conducted?

There are at least two competitive intelligence insights here. First is that Mobic attained competitive leadership by focusing on just on detailing and product sampling. Regular visits and doctor PR are variants of detailing. Secondly, competitive superiority is achievable without attending to all or even most of the available competitive activities. It is focusing that made for the strategic difference.

As you can see, you can learn and monitor competitors and their competitive strategies without directly sourcing data on them. Surveying our common target customers presents the best competitive intelligence source and at the same time the most ethical approach.

In ethics, nothing beats the old golden rule: do unto others what you want others to do to you. As a reference for business ethics, a good resource would be John Maxwell's book, "There's No Such Thing As 'Business' Ethics (There's Just Ethics)."

We're out of space, so we'll answer your second question next Friday. Send questions to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net. God bless!

GOINGS-ON

MAP MAKES MUSIC. Officials of the Management Association of the Philippines during the launch of its Christmas concert Adeste Fideles on Dec. 14 at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park. Part of its proceeds will go to underwriting the ongoing management education workshop of the 760-strong MAP. For inquiries, call 751 1149 or 751 1152.

YOUNG INVENTOR. Philips Philippines recently gave its Most Promising Invention Award to high school and college students in the recently concluded DOST-sponsored National Inventors' Week. Philips' awards are aimed at recognizing Filipino students. Philippine Science High School Diliman student Mariel Chavez, wins first place for her Paratoluenesulfonate-doped Polypyrrole as EMF Electrode Source. Beside her is Butch Soriano, Philips Medical Systems general manager.

SERVICE AWARD. Procter & Gamble's Manila Service Center (P&G Asia Pte. Ltd. Manila Regional Operating Headquarters) was recently awarded the "Asia Shared Service Center of the Year" for 2006 (Mature Shared Services Organization category) at the recently held Asia Shared Services Summit 2006 in Singapore. Organized by the International Quality & Productivity Center (IQPC), the summit was attended by over 200 leaders from the shared service industry in Asia.

You win some, you lose some

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

FRIDO ONG, KNOWN AS THE distributor of La Coste shoes in the country, got a call from Mall of Asia's Stephen Tan.

The message was, "We have a good space for La Bagagerie but you have to come here now and sign the deal."

Just two days earlier, Ong and the makers of the French brand were in the mall looking for a suitable location for the boutique they wanted to open.

They found none. So when the call came, they dropped everything, rushed to MOA and signed the contract.

Despite the almost no choice situation they found themselves in, the Marquee Retail Distribution Groups Inc., has no regrets.

The MOA branch proved to be a good location for the bags with sales beating their only other shop at the Edsa Shangri-la Plaza Mall by four times.

Marquee is handled by Tristan, Ong's son with top advertising lady Yoly Villanueva, who studied at Thames School, now Entrepreneurs School of Asia, owned by Lucio Tan's daughter Vivienne and finished at Portsmouth University outside of London.

Frido stumbled upon the French brand during a trip to Paris when he wanted a trolley bag. He liked the brand and wanted to bring it to Manila. But for one year, he did not know how to get in touch with them.

It was only when the French Embassy in Manila met up with partners of French firms in the Philippines did Ong get help.

The French Embassy put Ong in touch with La Bagagerie and having had a track record with La Coste (another French brand) shoes, he was able to get the franchise of the bag line.

LA BAGAGERIE
329
LA BAGAGERIE

TRISTAN V. Ong

It opened in Shangri-la but from the first day, Ong admits sales have been very disappointing. Today monthly sales in Shangri-la average about P80,000 while that in MOA, it has reached a high of P400,000.

Tristan points out that the luggage line was not moving in Shangri-la despite the fact that the market of the mall had a high awareness of the brand. But in the MOA branch, luggage sells well.

Ong explains that this is because there are a lot of tourists in MOA.

"It is really a destination place. But you also have to make sure you have a good location because there are more people in some areas than others," he says.

Ong has been in retail for 10 years. He stumbled across the La Coste line serendipitously.

"It just fell on my lap," he says.

He had just retired as marketing director of Pepsi Cola in the Philippines—the one providing the concentrate.

A former executive from Pepsi NY called to ask what he was doing.

"Playing golf," Ong replied.

He met with the executive and was shown a line of brands he was looking distributors for.

Ong says he was shown La Coste, Speedo, Ellesee and others but expressed interest in La Coste.

Despite the fact that he had no retailing experience, in 1995, he became the first exclusive distributor franchisee for La Coste.

"The principals expected me to put it in department stores," Ong says but he knew the margins would be less if he did it this way. So he opted for stand alone boutiques.

"But the biggest obstacle to expansion was the inability to get space in malls. We were unknowns. At the same time they were required to get a minimum number of pairs per line of footwear—even with only one shop."

Ong admits it was a slow climb but the turning point came when they opened in Glorietta.

"It made us legit," he says and from then on they have had no problems when applying for shops in malls.

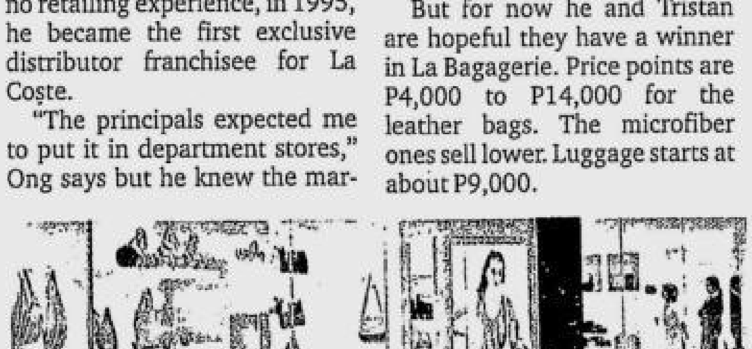
The 10th store of La Coste will be in Trinoma, an Ayala development in Quezon City.

Today, he says La Coste sells almost 100,000 pairs of shoes a year. Price tags of these are about P4,500 to over P5,000.

After La Coste, Ong brought in Burberrys but he found that after marketing it and overhead costs, he only came out to breakeven. So when Anton Huang of Store Specialists Inc. offered to get the franchise from him, Ong agreed.

Ong says he has his share of misses too—Ellesee, a sports brand, and Pony shoes—did not do well in the Philippines.

But for now he and Tristan are hopeful they have a winner in La Bagagerie. Price points are P4,000 to P14,000 for the leather bags. The microfiber ones sell lower. Luggage starts at about P9,000.



Marketing to the modern men

From page B2-1

ability of a variety of eating outlets and sales promotions and discounts.

Cleanliness in shopping areas is extremely important to male shoppers. This is no surprise as male shoppers put a premium on image and dingy malls reflect the opposite. Moreover, male buyers value the quality of customer service and experience. These include good product knowledge by sales attendants, a friendly design layout, unique and wide tenant mix and pleasant ambience. In particular, knowledgeable floor attendants who are both sincere and responsive in the manner they address inquiries increases shopper enjoyment.

Likewise, male shoppers appreciate a buying process that increases their understanding of product instructions without making them feel stupid. This leaves them feeling empowered during the buying process.

Yet while more men today are visible in shopping areas, they have to be weaned from their present functional or largely product purchase motive to something that is more experiential where they begin to enjoy mall activities, window shopping, networking or socializing with friends in the mall and/or shopping areas. Lee, Ibrahim and Shan's male shopper study reveal that sales and promotions directed to male shoppers are likely to increase their shopper experience. For example, malls can run male-oriented themes while co-branding with clubs, gyms, spas, fitness and wellness centers, etc. with predominantly male membership to ensure attendance in mall activities.

What men are starting to buy

Research analyst Datamonitor confirms the growth of the male grooming market worldwide. While consumption of more revolutionary and innovative men's toiletries and cosmetics industries is not dramatic, as anticipated, the industry continues to experience substantial growth from this segment. Men today are fuelling the growth behind hair gels, facial and body wash, moisturizers, deep tissue and sports massage, anti-wrinkle and rejuvenating creams, spa and wellness products and men-only vacations or "mancations." But they are not all ready for the more revolutionary nail color or nail art, gentleman's manicure, eyebrow threading, for men-only lip colors, etc.

What makes them buy

Marketing to men is very different from marketing to women. Women's motive for shopping is predominantly experiential. Shopping provides relief from stress and women are naturally pulled into the frenzied events organized by malls. Not so, the men. While men in today's generation are more consumptive and a bit more self-indulgent than previous generations, they have remained as functional and rational in their purchase habits as their fathers before them. Men, generally dislike long queues and big, noisy crowds. Following are some of the ways marketers can reach more men and increase their level of spending:

1. Men have a high affinity for brands and image. Because they are predominantly cautious buyers, they are not experimental or impulse buyers, they would rather stick to brands and shopping areas endorsed by their families, friends and peers. A 2005 ACNielsen proprietary research on the male market complements this finding. Hence, it is important for marketers whose brands address the needs of the male market to engage in sustained brand building efforts.

2. Because men are rational buyers, they will always find comfort in products and services that communicate practical and relevant benefits and come with instructional labels. On the other hand, shops that cater to men must invest in knowledgeable sales staff, after sales service and responsive customer service counters.

3. Men are generally loyal buyers. They have buying inertia and will not seek out shops and other brands if their existing brand or shop is able to satisfy their needs.

4. Because men are cautious buyers, they rely on friends, family and peers as their primary source of information. Advertising, media and other forms of communication are a means to reinforce the information they have acquired but are necessary to clinch their image of the brand. Thus, promo tie-ins with men-only clubs, gyms, activity centers, etc. is one certain way to reach men. On the other hand, reaching out to women's clubs, gyms and networking activities can help further draw in the men as women can strengthen the message received by men.

5. Visibility among influencers is critical to marketing to men. Because male shoppers rely on their family, friends and peers, word-of-mouth endorsements, it is wise to offer promos and discounts among couples, male peers and families.

(The author is a Professor of Marketing and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional Schools Graduate School of Business and is Chief Brand Strategist of MKS Consulting)

Share transfers made easy

TAX-FILES

By Maria Rachel V. Riego de Dios
and Ruben R. Rubio, SGV & Co.

FOR NON-RESIDENT CORPORATIONS OR individuals, selling their shares in a domestic company may not be as simple as it seems and may prove to be complicated when done without proper planning. We are referring here to Philippine companies whose shares are not listed in the Philippine Stock Exchange. Before the Philippine company shares can be transferred in the name of the buyer or new owner, the seller would have to secure the requisite certificate authorizing registration (CAR) and tax clearance certificate (TCL) from the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). Securing the CAR/TCL can prove to be a tedious process unless the seller and buyer are properly advised on the taxes and procedures.

What are the taxes to be paid?

The sale of shares is generally subject to two types of taxes—capital gains tax (CGT) and documentary stamp tax (DST).

On the one hand, the CGT is imposed on the net capital gains realized during the taxable year from the sale, barter, exchange or other disposition of shares of stock in a domestic corporation (except shares sold through the stock exchange) at the rate of 5 percent for the first P100,000 and 10 percent for the exceeding amount.

The gain (or loss) in the sale of shares of stocks in a domestic corporation is computed as follows—the selling price (consideration) or the fair market value of the subject shares of stock, whichever is higher, less the acquisition cost of said shares.

For shares not listed on the stock exchange, the fair market value of the shares shall be their book value nearest the valuation date based on the latest audited financial statements.

The book value of the shares of stock not listed in the stock exchange shall be prima facie considered as their fair market value.

Since the gain from the sale of shares of stock in a domestic corporation is treated as derived entirely from sources within the Philippines, the gain from the sale thereof shall be subject to CGT. This is regardless of the nationality of the transferor-seller and the transferee-buyer, or irrespective of the place where the sale is perfected and/or consummated, or where the sales document is executed and delivered, or where the payment of the purchase price is made.

On the other hand, the DST is imposed at the rate of seventy five centavos (P0.75) on each P200 of the par value of the shares of stock. Being a neutral tax, the DST could be paid by either the seller or the buyer. Thus, the liability for the DST would depend on the contractual arrangement of the parties: If it is agreed that the seller will pay the DST, then the seller will file the tax return and pay the tax thereon. Conversely, if it is agreed that the buyer will pay the DST, then the buyer will file the tax return and pay the tax.

Are there any tax exemptions?

Section 32(B)(5) of the 1997 Tax Code provides that "income of any kind, to the extent required by any treaty obligation binding upon the Government of the Philippines" may be exempted from income tax. This section may prove particularly useful for nonresident sellers who are residents of countries with whom the Philippines has an existing income tax treaty. The Philippines currently has existing income tax treaties with 36 countries. Depending on the relevant tax treaty, the gain from the sale of the shares may be exempted from CGT.

But of course, the matter does not stop there. The parties have to apply for a tax treaty relief application with the BIR to confirm the capital gains tax exemption. What if the relevant tax treaty does not provide for capital gains tax exemption? This simply means that the seller would have to pay CGT, unless the transaction is exempt by reason of the nature of the transaction or the parties involved.

Is there any exemption from DST?

The DST regulations provide that all transfer of shares of stock of a domestic corporation is subject to DST upon execution of the deed transferring ownership or rights thereto. Nominee arrangements may be exempted subject to certain conditions.

Where are the taxes paid? When are the taxes due?

A nonresident seller does not simply accomplish the CGT return (BIR Form 1707) and pay the tax with any bank. There is a designated BIR Revenue District Office (RDO) in the Philippines for the filing of returns for nonresident foreign corporations. The tax is paid with the authorized agent bank (AAB) within the jurisdiction of the said RDO. The return must be filed, and payment made within 30 days following the sale or disposition. Prior to the filing of the return, the seller is required to secure a Tax Identification Number (TIN), if it does not yet have one, to enable it to file the return and pay the tax.

If no CGT is due, the nonresident seller is still required to file the CGT return. It is a common misconception that the seller is already exempt from filing the CGT return simply because transaction is exempt from CGT.

The DST return (BIR Form 2000) is required to be filed with and the tax paid, through the AAB which has jurisdiction over the residence or principal place of business of the taxpayer. The tax is due within five (5) days after the close of the month when the taxable document was executed. Either the seller or the buyer will file the return and pay the tax depending on their contractual arrangement.

It is important to remember the due dates and venue for filing the return and paying the taxes as late filing and late payment of taxes will be subject to the 25 percent surcharge and 20 percent interest computed per annum on top of the basic tax due. If no tax is due on the sale or transfer of shares, compromise penalties will nonetheless be imposed and will have to be paid before the CAR/TCL is issued.

Securing the CAR/TCL

After all the returns have been filed, taxes paid, and after the confirmation of the tax-exempt status of the transaction (if applicable) has been secured from the BIR, then the parties are now ready to apply for the issuance of the CAR/TCL from the BIR. Copies of the deed of assignment, stock certificates, audited financial statements are only some of the documents that will be submitted to the BIR.

If the application is found in order, then the CAR/TCL will be issued as a matter of course. The issuance of the CAR/TCL simply means that the taxes have been paid and, therefore, the Corporate Secretary is now authorized to register the transfer in the stock and transfer book of the corporation and issue new stock certificates in the name of the buyer. Securing the CAR/TCL should not really take time if all the preparatory works have been done properly.

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Milan Art School gets ready for two Filipino designers

THE ARRIVAL OF TWO FILIPINO designers is eagerly awaited in the prestigious Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti (NABA) in Milan, Italy, where they will attend summer courses in design, this coming July 2007.

Now, it's only a matter of finding out who they are.

That's what the Adobo Design Competition 2007 will determine in March 2007. Conceived by adobo magazine, a publication on advertising and brand communication, the project is promoting greater creativity in fields of Philippine design. In fact, the theme of the competition is "The Filipino has what it takes. Creativity is the Filipino's new currency."

Adobo editor in chief Angel Guerrero says that while Filipinos are not lacking in great ideas, it is the crafting and the design that is often found wanting, Whoever among the country's many designers goes to Milan, she hopes that they can contaminate the rest of the Philippine designers with their newfound skills and knowledge.

By the term "contaminate," Guerrero is referring to the concept of of cultural contamination, which famous design educator, author and curator Anna Barbara, discussed in great detail at the launch. Barbara, who flew in from Milan for the event, also spoke about the learning opportunities in NABA Milano—which is the main prize of the competition.

The graphic design shoot out is open to all students and practitioners in the Philippines, between the ages of 18 and 35. The competition is divided into three categories: Poster Design, Motion Graphics and Wearable Graphics. In keeping with the concept of cultural contamination, select judges from different disciplines of design—like photographers Neil Oshima and Giampiero Gastaldi, among others—are tasked with choosing the three winners and their runners up.

The winners of the Poster Design and Motion Graphics competition receive scholarships to a one-month graphic design course in Milan, Italy this coming July. The winner of the Wearable Graphics competition gets the privilege of having his design made and distributed by a leading fashion retail store in Manila. All winners are also entitled to language courses with Dante Alighieri Manila, the foundation dedicated to all great things Italian.

Deadline for entries is March 1, 2007. The awards ceremony is on April 12, 2007.

For more information, visit www.adobodesignawards.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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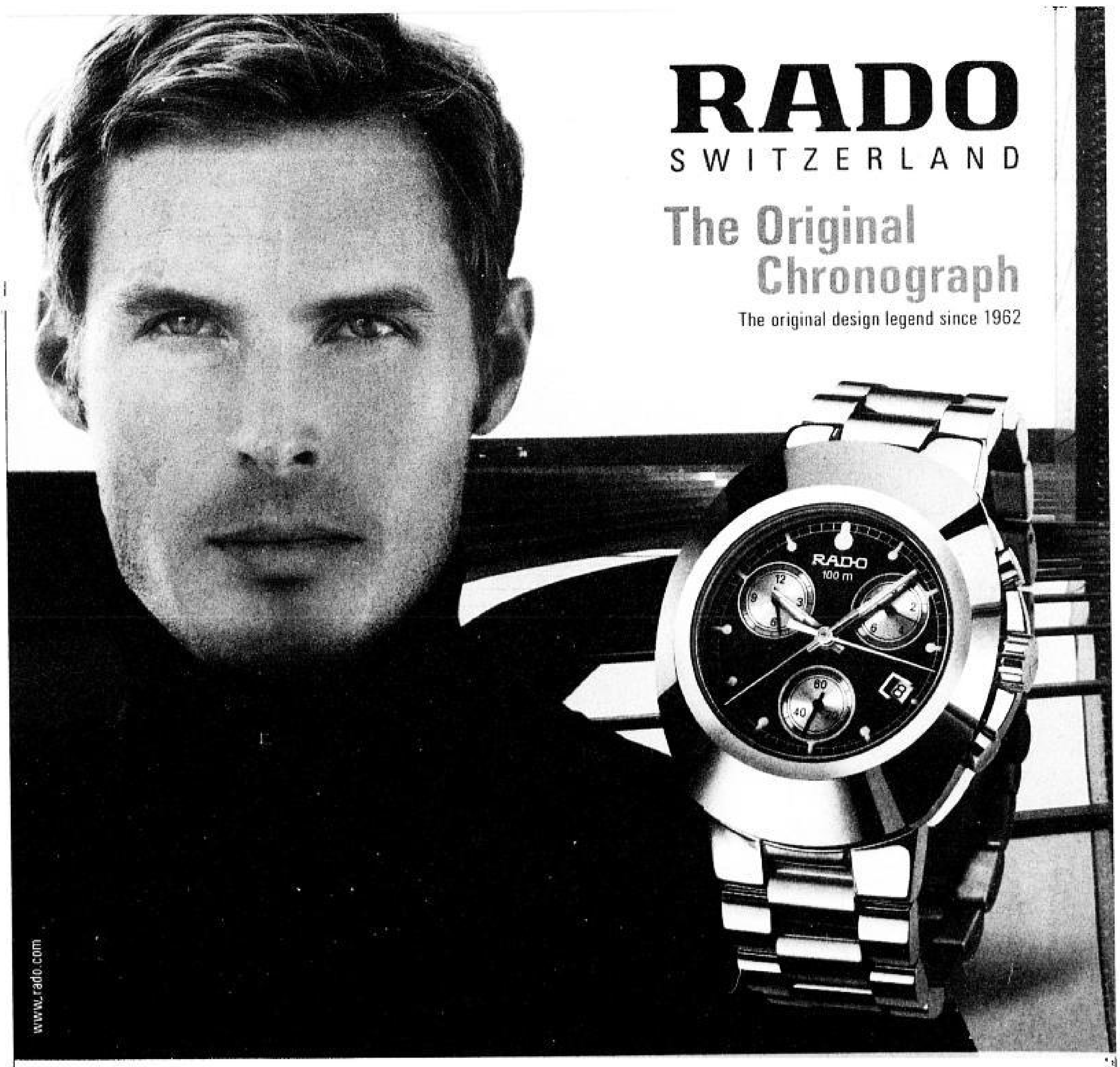
LAUNCH of the design competition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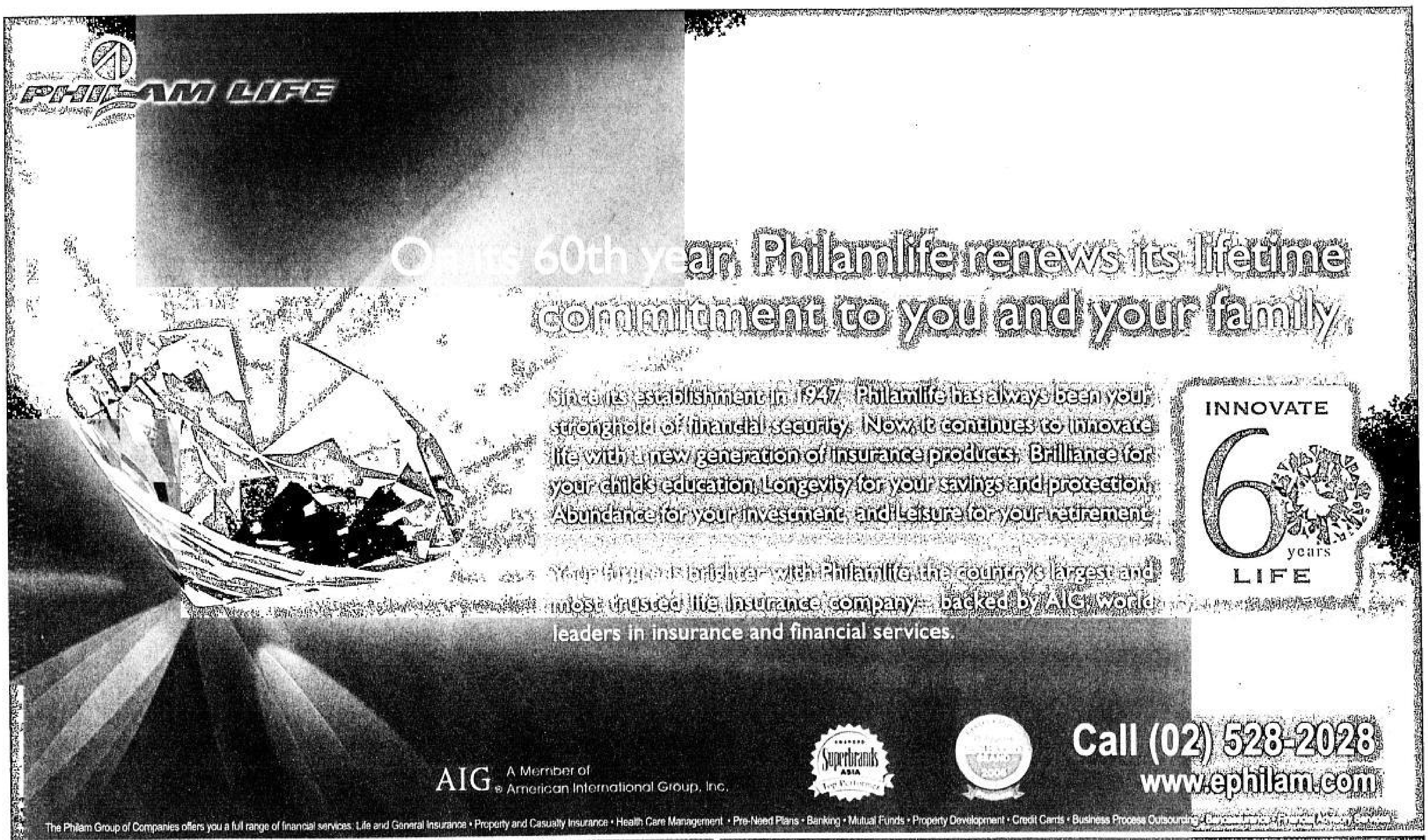

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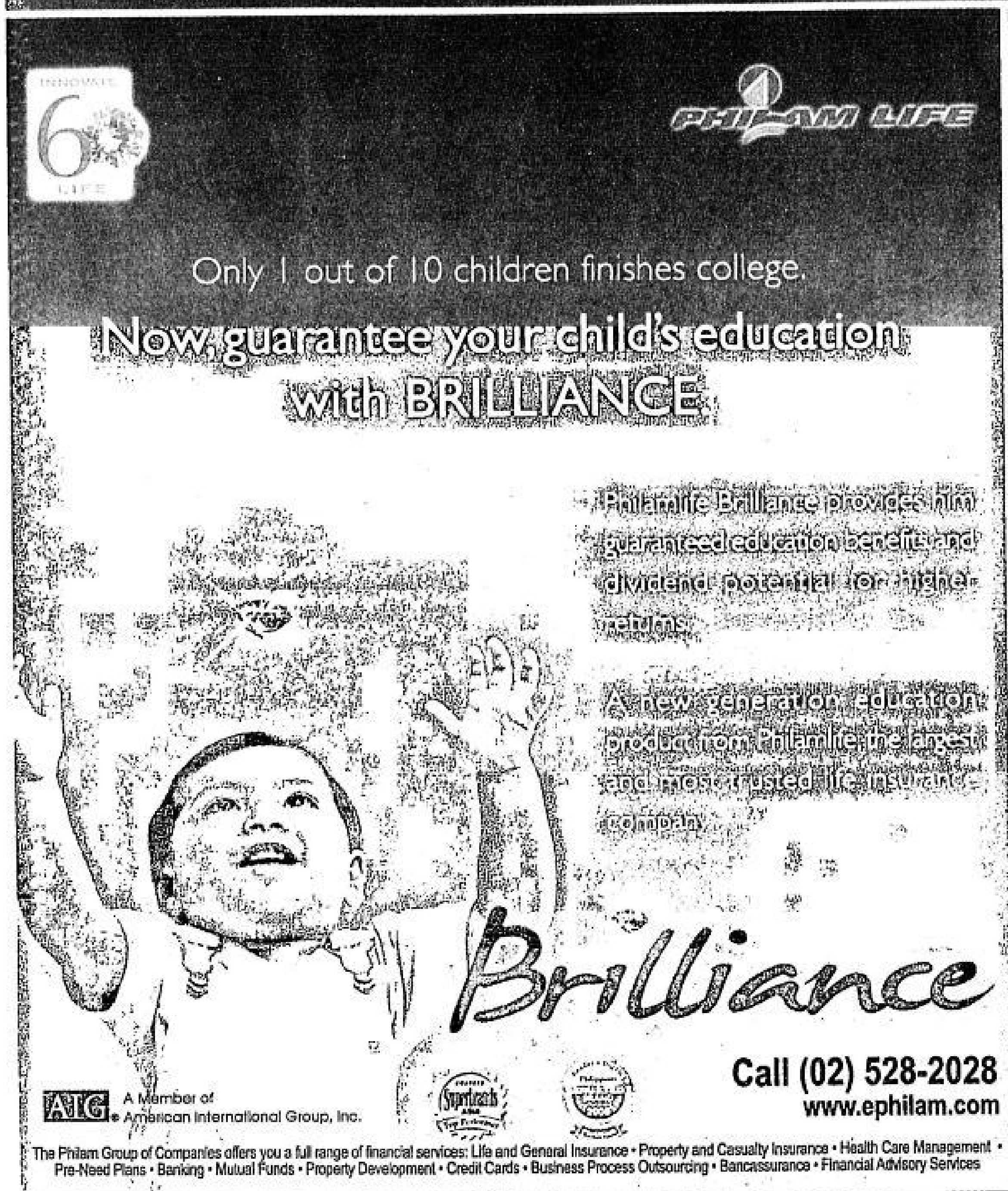

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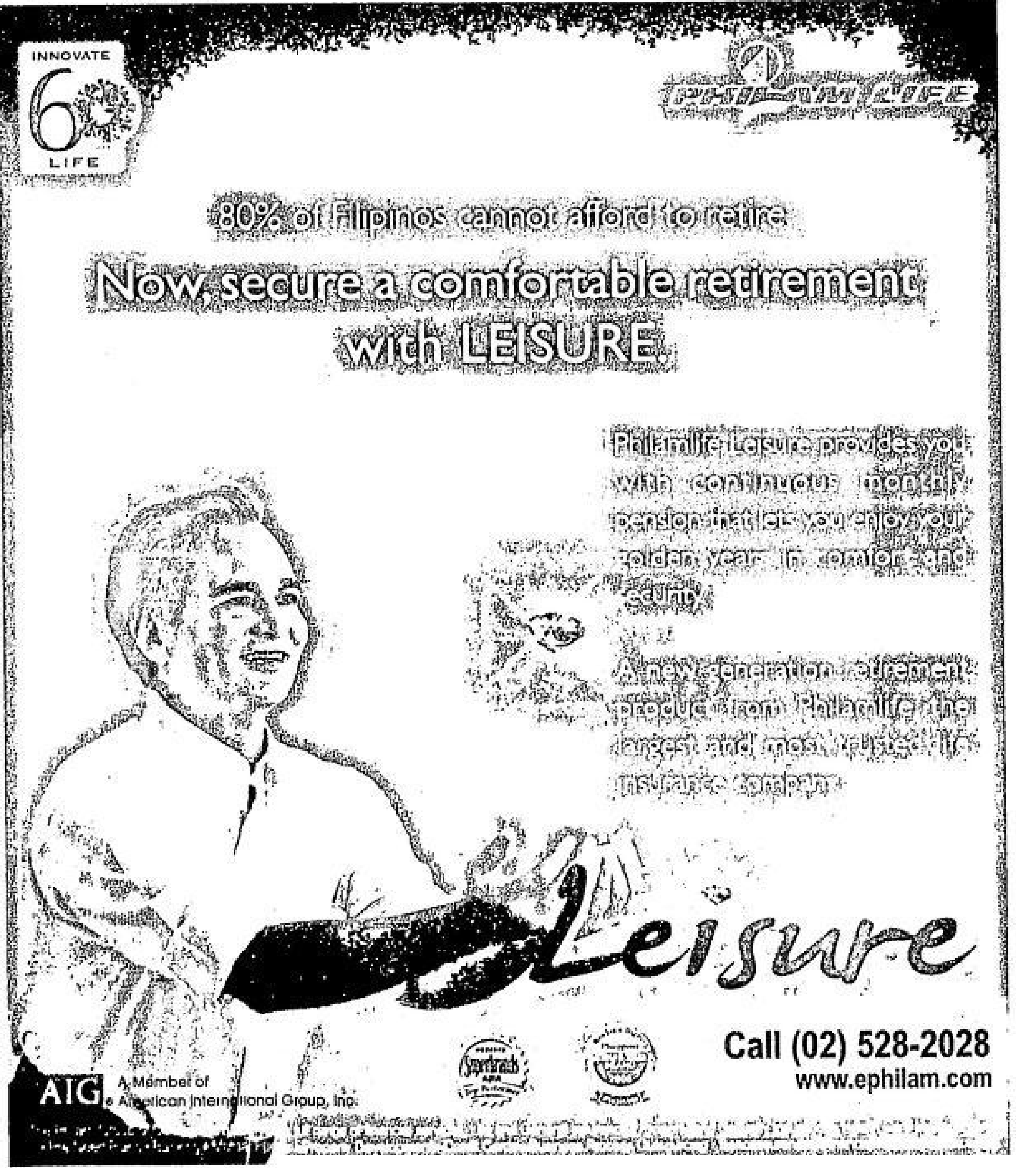

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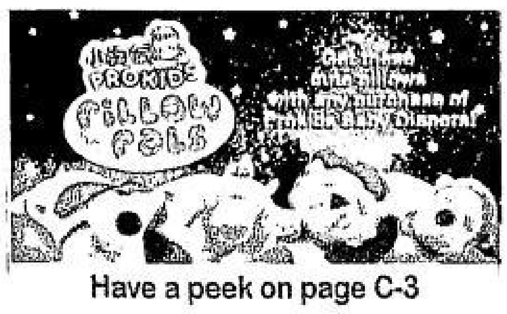
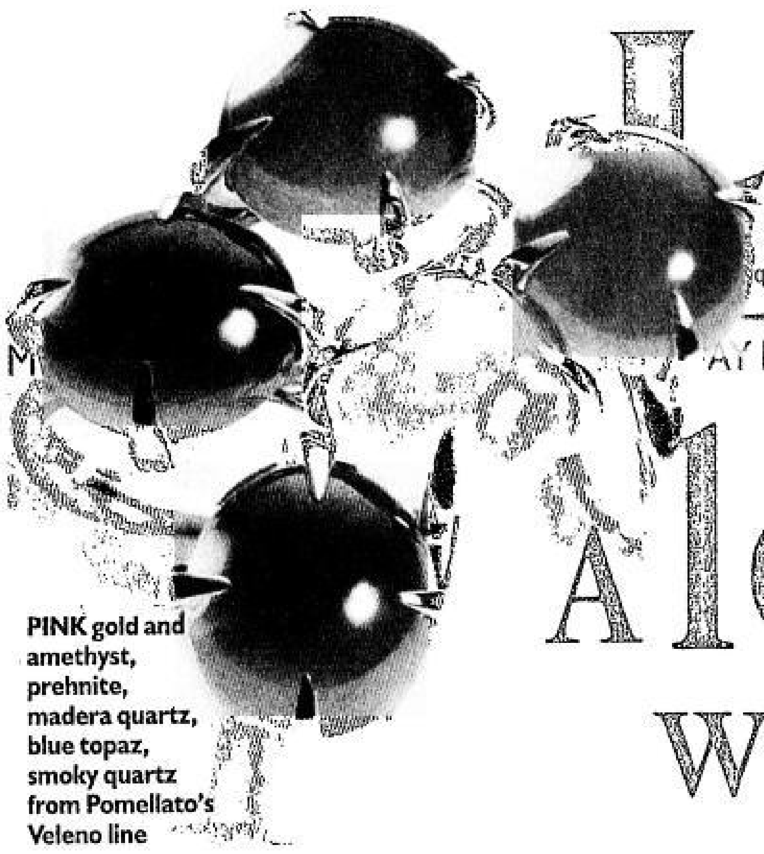
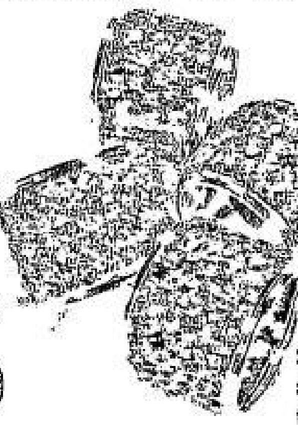


Have a peek on page C-3

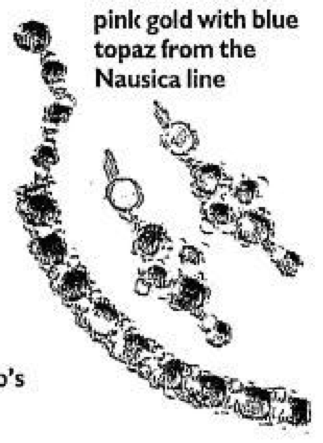
A love affair with gems



PINK gold and amethyst, prehnite, madera quartz, blue topaz, smoky quartz from Pomellato's Veleno line



SAPPHIRES and diamonds from Pomellato's Abbia line



SANDBLASTED pink gold with blue topaz from the Nausica line

By Pam Pastor

IT STARTED WITH A PROPHECY.

When Vanessa Figueroa was 15 or 16, a fortune teller in New York said she would one day work with metals.

She shrugged the prediction off, unaware that some years later she would indeed be working with metals—precious metals, that is.

Figueroa is the woman behind Vanafi, a store known for carrying some of the world's best-known jewelry brands.

Life in the jewelry industry may sound glamorous, but Figueroa stresses the need for hard work. A fifth-generation jeweler, Figueroa is a gemologist and jewelry designer who has had training in New York, Paris, Antwerp and London.

Her perseverance has paid off. "In the beginning, we looked for brands. Now the brands find us."

Today, beautiful pieces from some of the most exclusive jewelry brands from different parts of the globe can be found twinkling inside Vanafi's glass displays. Vanafi is home to Hearts on Fire, Damiani, Lalique, Stefan Hafner and Staurino, apart from its house brand.

Because Figueroa values the opportunity to carry the best brands, she is very careful when it comes to choosing the brands she'd bring in. "We don't want to carry a brand for the sake of carrying a brand," she says. She believes instinct also comes into play. "I must fall in love with their pieces first."

One brand that Figueroa has fallen in love with is Pomellato, an Italian jewelry company that is No. 3 in Europe and No. 9 in the world. Its market in Asian countries like Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and the Philippines is growing.

"Their strength is their use of color. Everything is handmade—cut to fit a design," explains Figueroa.

Pomellato's newest collections were recently unveiled at Vanafi's boutique in Shangri-La Mall. Displayed were pieces from Pomellato's different lines—Nudo, Veleno, Pin-Up, Sabia, Victoria, Eva and Nausica.

The beautifully handcrafted pieces feature gorgeous stones—champagne diamonds, blue topaz, sapphires in different colors, opal, amethyst and more—set on white and pink gold.

Target market

Pomellato's target market are "the stylish women, women who are not out to impress, who know that they want," says Figueroa. "The brand encourages you to build on your jewelry and to play with them."

There's no doubt that women will love the rings that are meant to be worn even two or three at a time. Pomellato's pieces are not only fun—they make a strong statement when worn.

Irene Carlino, Pomellato's division area manager for the Far East, says: "We have pieces that appear to be aggressive, that have a strong color but are still feminine. Volume is very big in Italy now. Pomellato's pieces are gorgeous."

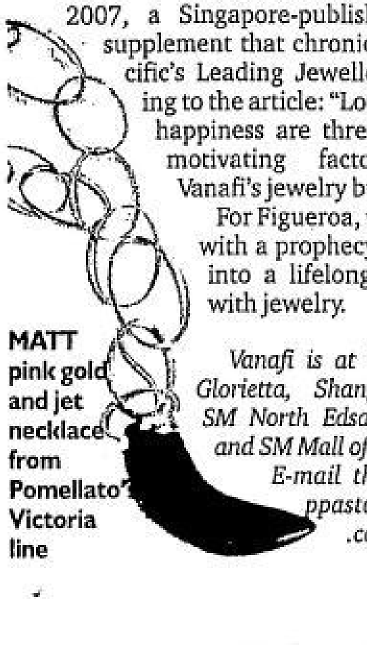
Attention to detail is evident in every Pomellato piece—even in the closure. "One peculiarity is that every closure is different. They are never the same. Sometimes they hide it, sometimes they emphasize it," Carlino points out.

The pieces are breathtaking, that's for sure. But the hefty price tags can be a challenge for Vanafi.

"It's not easy to communicate the brand, but they will always forget the price and only the quality and beauty will remain," assures Figueroa.

Vanafi was included in Solitaire Media's Brilliant Jewellers Magazine for 2006-2007, a Singapore-published annual supplement that chronicles Asia-Pacific's Leading Jewellers. According to the article: "Love, trust and happiness are three important motivating factors behind Vanafi's jewelry business."

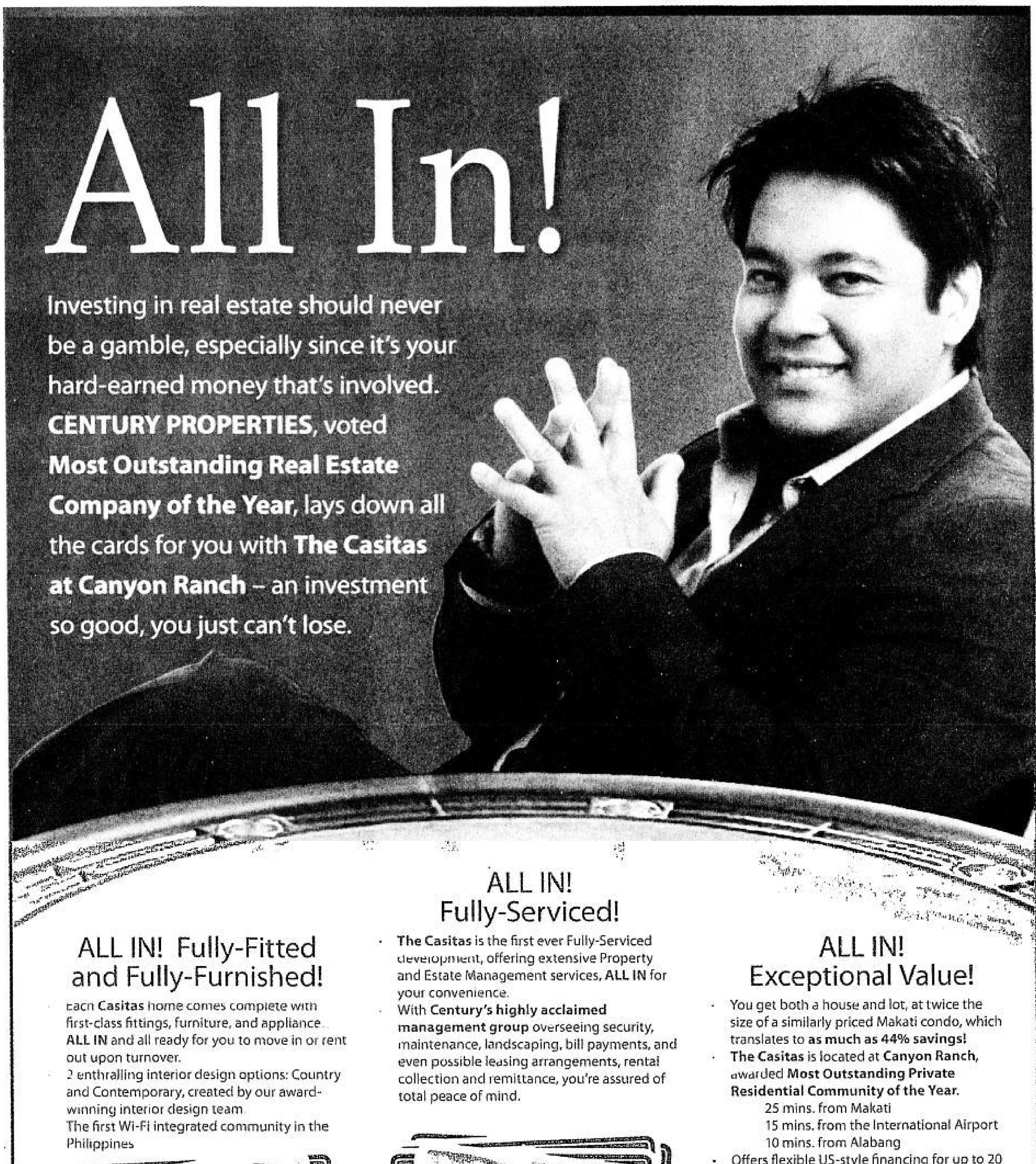
For Figueroa, what started with a prophecy has turned into a lifelong love affair with jewelry.



MATT pink gold and jet necklace from Pomellato's Victoria line

Vanafi is at The Podium, Glorietta, Shangri-La Mall, SM North Edsa's The Block and SM Mall of Asia.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph.



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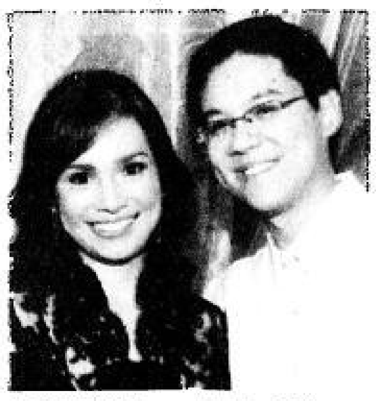
POPULAR Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and wife Marilou Khan

CEBU'S brilliant Gov. Gwen Garcia and businessman Michel Lhuillier, proud father of Monique L.

SINGER Cris Villonco and mother Monique Villonco

HSBC'S first couple Warner and Julie Manning


BEAUTIFUL couple. Lea Salonga and husband Robert Chien

ADORABLE couple ZsaZsa Padilla and Dolphy

Cosmo Manille's supreme fashionista night

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

GORGEOUS siblings Bubbles and Paolo Paraiso

NIVEA'S Janina Dizon and ABS-CBN Publishing's Ernie Lopez

MARIE Claire's Myrza Sison and Summit Publishing's Liza Gokongwei-Cheng

WHEN INTERNATIONALLY renowned couturier of the rich and famous, **Monique Lhuillier,** breezed into town, she had Cosmopolitan Manille's *alta-sociedad* and fashionable set in a frenzy, dahlings.

She had us on the edges of our expensive seats at the grand gala benefit dinner show at Makati Shangri-La's gorgeously decorated Rizal Ballroom.

Monique L. had brought the *tres* famous Manolo Blahnik collection to her show. The shoes complemented her fabulous ready-to-wear casual, cocktail outfits, ball gowns and stunning bridal collection, *palanggas*.

With Mac doing the makeup styling, **Robbie Carmona** directing and **Tina Ocampo** doing the venue styling, the event turned out to be the ultimate in this year's social calendar.

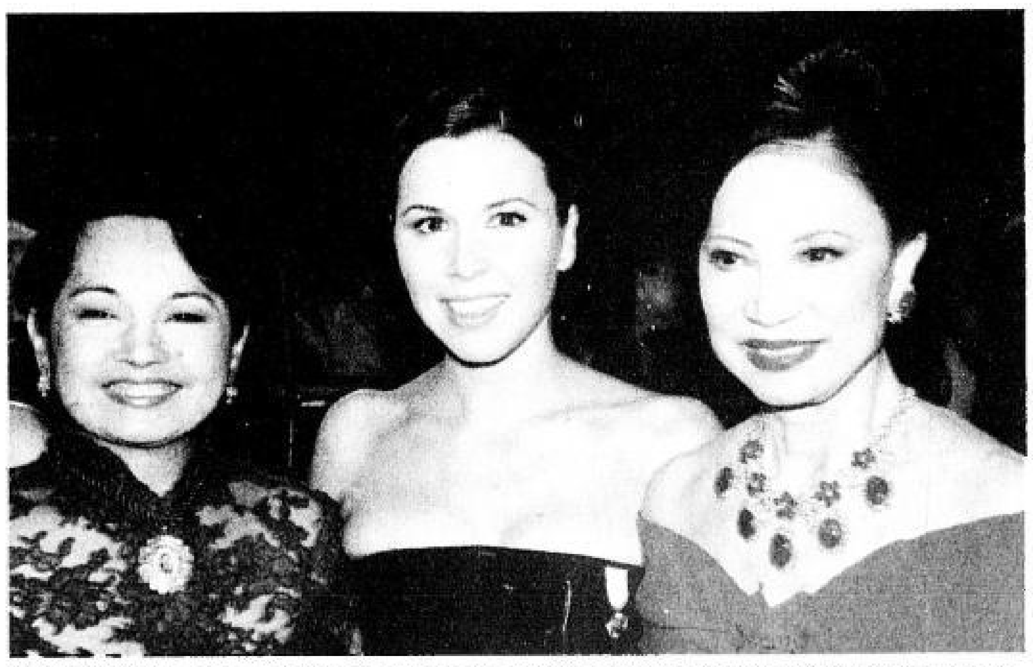
During the gala, the fabulous **Lea Salonga,** who was a Monique Lhuillier bride herself, had us mesmerized with her songs. She wore—but, *naturellement*—a Monique Lhuillier creation. **President Macapagal Arroyo** was a fashion plate, too, in her Monique L. original.

Needless to say dahlings, Cebu's high society jetted in full hurricane force. Cebu's popular, eye-catching governor, **Gwen Garcia,** headed the pack.

When Monique Lhuillier made her debut in the luxury bridal fashion market, her work was immediately acknowledged as an emerging signature in the highly specialized niche.

Hollywood celebrities and Manille's social registry started walking down the aisle as Monique Lhuillier brides.

Then her creations began gracing the red carpet during the Oscar awards, worn by loads of beautiful faces from Tinseltown.


PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo; woman of the hour, gorgeous Monique Lhuillier; and Imelda Cojuangco, high priestess of the art and charity fundraiser

WASHINGTON Sycip and Asia Society's Doris Magsaysay Ho

ASIA Society's Lizzie Zobel, Shangri-La GM Greg Dogan and Bantay Bata 163's Mons Romulo Tantoco

STORE Specialists' first couple Nina Herrera and Anton Huang

DORA Bugbee and Monique L.'s proud mother, ultra-glam Amparito Lhuillier

SMART businessman Tom Bugbee, Nokia's Luanne Erni, JR Isaac, Tessa Prieto Valdes and Nokia country GM William Hamilton-Whyte

Her famous designs have also been featured in high-end publications and shows—from Vogue to Vanity Fair, Newsweek and Elegant Brides; from "Oprah" to CNN.

The Ayala Group was the main presenter of the show. Co-presenters were M. Lhuillier Philippines, Nokia, Rustan's Essenses and Stores Specialists Inc.

Beneficiaries were the Asia Society Philippines and Bantay Bata 163 program.

Asia Society in the Philippines promotes understanding between the US and Asia.

Bantay Bata, on the other hand, is the only media-based organization in Asia that operates a child help line (163), a 24/7 national call center, children's residential institutes, and various social services and advocacy programs.

Other hot namedropables who rushed in to support this *tres* exclusive event were Cartier, Cathay Pacific, Citigroup, Belo Medical Group and the Department of Tourism, among others.

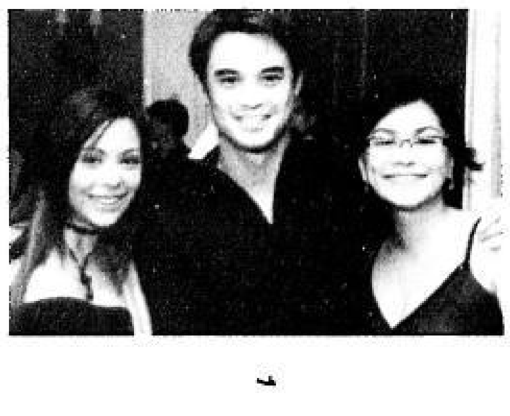
The ultra-glamorous patroness of the arts and charity, **Imelda Cojuangco,** was the chair of the benefit show, which was cochaired by **Doris Magsaysay Ho, Gina Lopez, Mons Romulo Tantoco** and **Lizzie Zobel.**

A night of dazzling glitz and glamour all for a much needed cause, *palanggas*.

NIVEA'S brilliant marketing director Rica King flanked by TBWA's Tong Puno and Vanessa Escobar

RICHARD Gutierrez, Douglas Quijano, Lucas Tagarda of Letran Knights and Wendell Ramos

NIVEA's Roselle Cua, Alice Cayaban, Dez Duran and Ida Dizon


NANCY Castiglione, Brad Turvey and Lunplus top gal Marilen Nuñez

Black and grand

To think that eons ago, black was for funerals, and now the world over, black has become the new red, *palanggas*.

So black it was as motif for the grand, super-fun launch bash of Nivea's latest popular deo-product at the Garden Ballroom of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, *palanggas*.

Naturellement, with a happening like this, tons of our town's hottest namedroppable personalities and stars breezed in their most stylish black garb, strutting their stuff as they hit the disco-inspired ballroom—a fab way to welcome Nivea's Deo Pure.

ACE Progres' shoulder bag and belt bag

"The new Nivea Deo Pure aims to be your best fashion savior, by giving you residue-free, 24-hour invisible protection for your underarms, which means, no more embarrassing white stains on your dark clothes, and has a light cool aquatic scent that women as well as men will surely love," said Nivea marketing director, the *simpatica* Rica King.

Après the welcome speech, a video of past Nivea super-fun events held at different island resorts in the country was shown. And *moi* couldn't believe the laughs we all had on how movie stars and personalities could have a great time together, but then leave it to Nivea to cook up such events, *palanggas*.

Grooving to the '70s and '80s disco beats and getting all pumped-up together with the tons of invitees was hot hostess Rica King, *natch*, with other dedicated Nivea execs. All made sure we partied like no other.

We did, dahlings! Hey, we must say "thank you" to cybersmart, workasonic woman **Marilen Nuñez** and her rah! rah! team from Lenplus, and the royal PR officer **Edd Fuentes** of Fuentes Publicity Network, who made this black night shine through up to the early morning light.

Bag shop

In spite of the horrendous traffic, *moi* didn't have any second thought to check out the fresh look and hip collection from Bratpack.

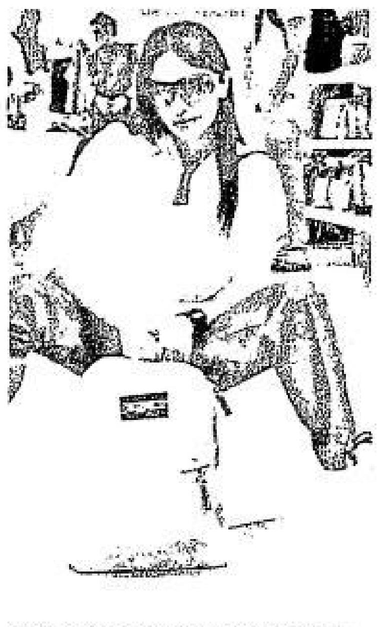
The latest collection of hip bags could be found in Bratpacks' newest concept store at The Block, SM City North Edsa, *palanggas*.

The casual bag authority, Bratpack, now sports a fresh logo and art. The shop has an awesome elegantly designed interior that is definitely hip and glam.

Hot Bratpack executives headed by **Susan Thai,** corporate adviser of Uniglobe Travelware Co. Inc., the company behind Bratpack, and **Marisol Marcelo,** marketing and sales director, proudly showed us around the new eye-catching store, the 10th in the Bratpack branch in the country.

HEDGREN computer and messenger bags

According to Marisol M.: "The store's hip new look is designed to suit the fashion taste of "bag-aholics" and the cool features of its wide selection of backpacks, shoulder bags, postman bags, laptop bags, tote bags, gym/duffel bags, wallets, *'pogi packs,' 'kikay kits,'* and belt bags."

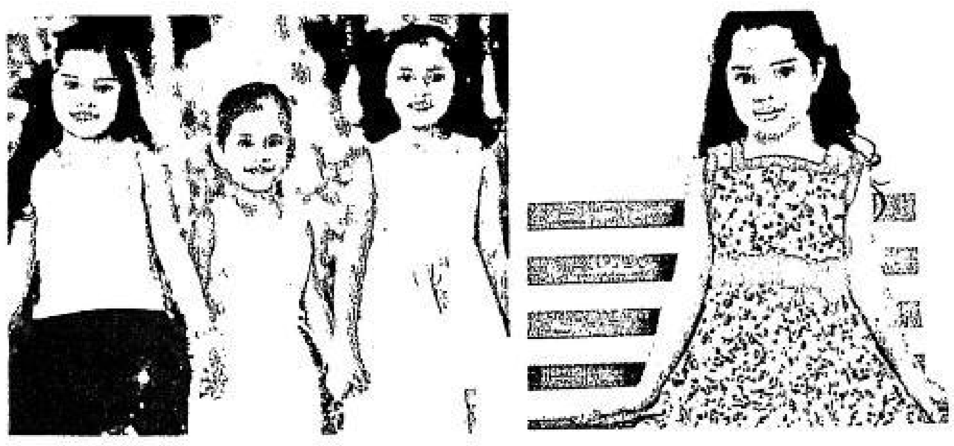

COOL backpack from Jansport

Dazzling models in chic casuals showed off the wonderful new set from the two international brands of Bratpack.

While the invitees admired the trendy casual bags in the store's fine façade, Bratpack gave away exciting raffle prizes, including a pair of the super-cool, Tsubo footwear, no less, *palanggas*.

Check out Bratpack's new look at its branches in Ayala Center Cebu; SM City Southmall, Davao, Pampanga and Cagayan de Oro; also in Robinsons Galleria and Robinsons Place Ermita.

BRATPACK HOTSHOTS. UTCI's Kristine Villaflor and Marisol Marcelo; Bratpack's Paul Sy; Susan Thai of Primer Group of Companies; Thomas Lim of Primer Group of Companies (seated); and Dinah Lim



PERIWINKLE dresses up a girl according to the qualities of her age: adorable, innocent, fun, dainty and pretty. Whether formal or casual, infant wear or kiddie wear, Periwinkle dresses are sure to capture every little girl's heart. Available at all Rustan's branches. Periwinkle also has shops at V-Mall, SM Mall of Asia, SM Megamall, The Block-SM North Edsa and SM Clark.

Seminar on visa application

GOINGS-ON

A SERIES OF SEMINARS ON HOW TO apply for United States tourist visa will be held 1-4 p.m. Dec. 9, 13 and 16 at the 5th Floor, YL Building, V.A. Rufino corner Salcedo, Legazpi Village, Makati City. US-licensed immigration lawyer Michael Templo of Templo & Templo Immigration Consultants is conducting the seminars. Participants can acquire tools for accomplishing tourist visa application and preparation of documents. They will also be taught skills to handle interviews through a question and answer session. Call 8935964, or text 0917-5380797 or 0917-6082276.

ATTY. Michael Templo

REUNION. The University of the Philippines' Writers Night, now on its 12th year, will be held tonight at the Hardin ng mga Diwata of the College of Arts and Letters, U.P. Diliman, QC. One of the highlights of the event is a book fair.

FASHION SHOW. In celebration of RP-UK Friendship Day, The British Embassy presents "British Accent," a fashion show Dec. 8, 7 p.m. at the Eastwood City Central Plaza, Libis, Quezon City, featuring the UK's hottest brands. One of the highlights is a concert celebrating British music. Participating companies include Debenhams, Warehouse, Marks and Spencer, Speedo, FCUK and Jaguar. Call 5808320.

FUNDRAISING CONCERT. The Christmas concert Adeste Fideles will be held Dec. 14 at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City. Part of the proceeds will support the ongoing management education workshop of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP). Call 7511149/1152, 8991767, 8963208 or 0916-7060130.

LECTURES. The W.G. Solheim II Foundation for Philippine Archaeology, Inc. holds lectures on "Jade Artifacts Found at Philippine Sites," Dec. 9, 3 p.m., at the Seminar Room of the Ortigas Foundation Library, 2/F, Ortigas Bldg., Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City. Call Cynthia Valdes at 8420329 or Andrea Ragrario at 9241836 or e-mail covaldes@zpdee.net or visit www.solheim-foundation.ph.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING. Robinson's Place Novaliches has literally been transformed into a shopping village offering bargain items, hard to find goods and a variety of toys, apparel, home decor and novelties sold in 111 tents, from 2-10 p.m. until Dec. 31. Shoppers can also check out Robinson's Place Novaliches' holiday attractions like the Giant Outdoor Tree, the Barbie in the 12 Dancing Princesses Live event Dec. 16 at 2-4 p.m. *Misa de Gallo*, Dec. 15-23 at 7 p.m. at the Mall's Activity Area.

IT EVENT. The Korea-Philippines IT Training Center (KorPhil), located at the Quezon City Polytechnic University campus compound on Quirino Avenue, QC, will hold "Converge QC" Dec. 14, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The event is open to the public. "Converge QC" will bring together industry, small business, ICT experts, the academe and government to create a community that can help and interact with each other. Call 9384532/3651, e-mail info@korphil.ph or visit www.korphil.ph.

WEEKEND SALE. Enjoy best buys at Sta. Lucia East's Holiday Weekend Sale, Dec. 8-10, 15-17, 22-24 and 29-31. Shoppers can enjoy up to 70 percent discount on selected items. For every P300 single or accumulated purchase receipt, shopper can get a chance to win in the raffle. Extended mall hours on sale dates. Meanwhile, Kids' Fair runs until Dec. 31. Get up to 50 percent discounts on kiddie items. A Meet and Greet activity with kids favorite cartoon characters and mascots is held every weekend. Free souvenir photo with St. Nick will be Dec. 24, 3-5 p.m., as "Santa Goes to SLE" runs until Dec. 25.

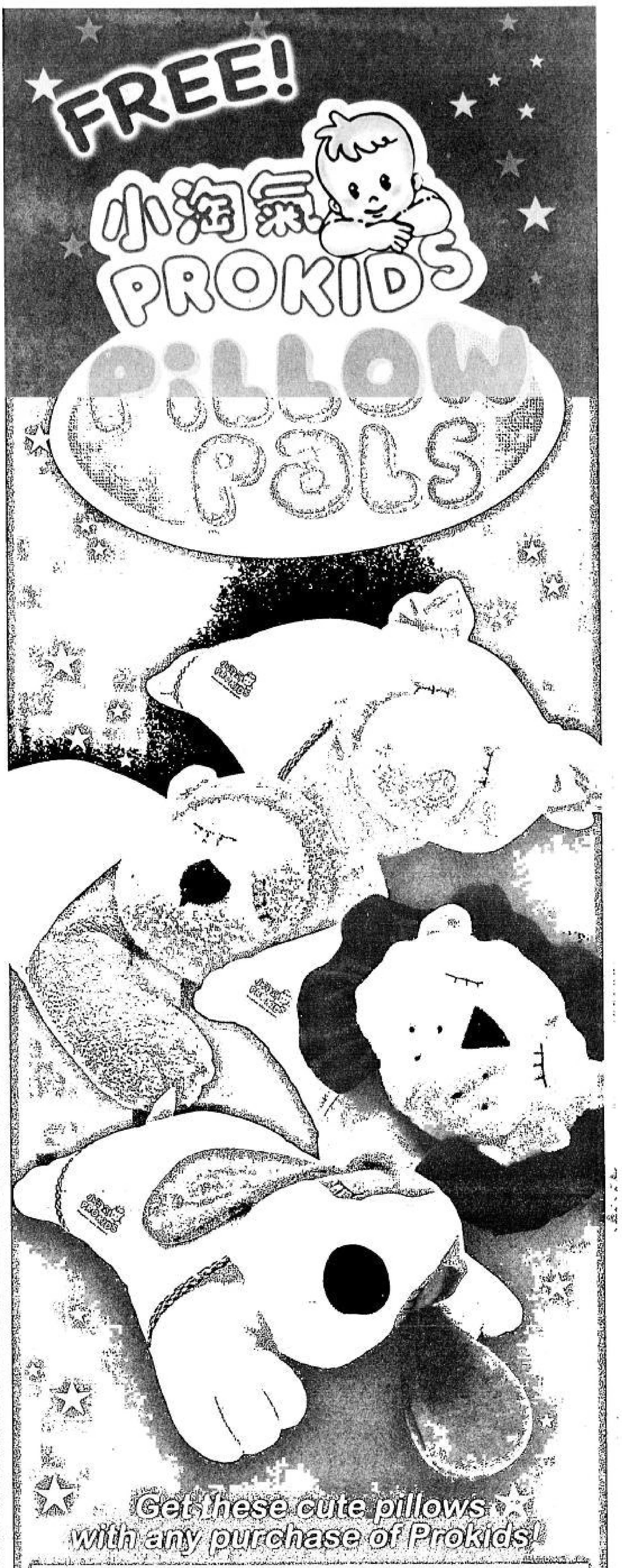
The Ultimate Japanese Experience.

Kuretake
JAPANESE RESTAURANT

Indulge yourself with the finest Japanese cuisine at Kuretake Restaurant. Be thrilled with the appetizing taste of our signature dishes from the freshest sashimi to the delectable taste of sukiyaki, tasty beef usuyaki, scrumptious tempura and other authentic Japanese specialties.

Absolutely tempting. Absolutely Japanese.

Visit us at R1-Level Poweplant Mall Lopez Drive
Rockwell Center, JP Rizal, Makati City.
Tel: 898-0509. Fax 898-0718


FREE!
小淘氣
PROKIDS
Pillow Pals
Get these cute pillows with any purchase of Prokids!

1. Promo Period: September 4 – December 31, 2006
2. Consumers may join by simply collecting wrappers with intact points of Prokids Premium Baby Diapers with Soft Cottony Magic Tape. Points per packaging are as follows:

Prokids Baby Diapers (with Soft Cottony Magic Tape)	Label Points
1 Mini Pack (4s)	1/4 point
1 Big Pack (24s, 22s, 20s, 18s, 16s)	1 point
1 Value Pack (48s, 44s, 40s, 36s, 32s)	2 points

3. Consumers must collect eight (8) points to be able to get one (1) collectible baby pillow design using the corresponding label points.

Pillow Designs	Points
A. Dog B. Pig C. Lion D. Monkey	8 points each

- Only entire wrappers with intact points of Prokids Premium Baby Diaper with Soft Cottony Magic Tape will be accepted.
- Entries containing cut-out points will NOT be honored.

4. Submit the required Prokids Premium Baby Diapers with Soft Cottony Magic Tape wrappers together with the complete information: sender's name, complete address where you want the premium item/s delivered, baby's name and age, telephone and/or mobile phone numbers, signature of parent/guardian plus the desired premium item, written on a piece of paper and enclosed in an envelope. For hard-to-find locations, landmark information of the address is encouraged for easy reference.
5. Entries can be mailed or hand carried to:

"Prokids Pillow Pals"
JS Unitrade Merchandise, Inc.
31st Floor, Raffles Corporate Center
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center,
Pasig City

OR

"Prokids Pillow Pals"
P.O. Box 14280 Pasig City

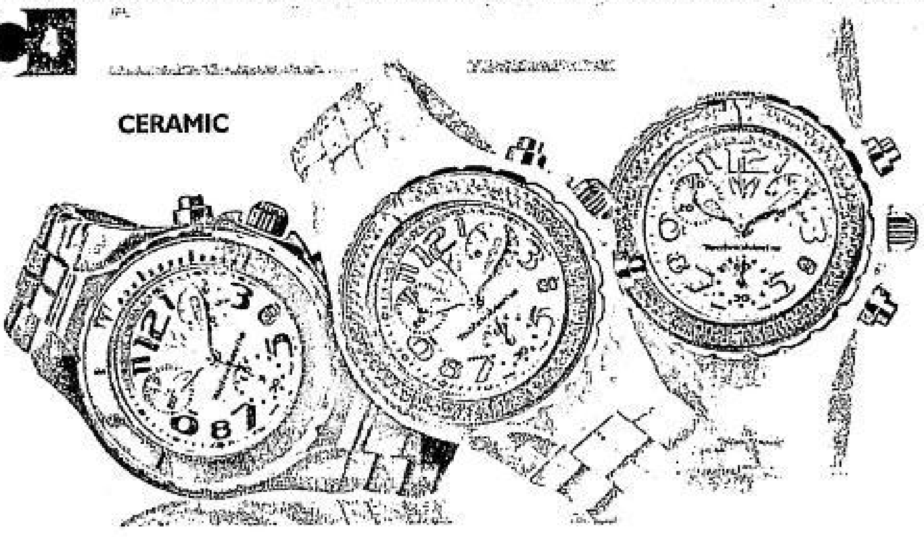
6. The chosen premium item/s will be delivered by JRS Express to the address submitted by the consumer. In the event that the entry sender is not present during the time of delivery, a member of the sender's household may be asked to sign a proof of delivery and receive the premium item/s in behalf of the entry sender.
7. Entries thru mail are qualified fifteen (15) days after the promo period.
8. Premium items will be delivered until sixty (60) days from the end of the promo period.
9. Consumers may join as many times as they want.
10. Prizes are not convertible to cash.

For more information,
please visit www.jsunitrade.com

JRS EXPRESS

PROKIDS
L 36

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2964, Series of 2006



CERAMIC

Sensational stocking stuffers

TIMEPIECES FROM THE TECHNOMARINE collection make perfect gifts this Christmas—from the Color Ceramic Collection for women to the rugged Hummer or Abyss 10 900 watch for men.

The Color Ceramic Chronograph collection is now available in three sizes, for women (33 mm and 39 mm) and men (42 mm), and in colors from white to baby pink, ocean blue, mauve and black. This high-tech ceramic watch is the epitome of chic and durability. Water resistant to 200 m, it boasts of Swiss chronograph movement, guilloche dials, and a choice of diamond or ceramic bezels.

Designed and created for women, the Techno Chrono Gummy Ceramic is a 39.5-mm scratch-proof, white, high-tech ceramic-case timepiece that makes for a perfect everyday accessory. It allows the wearer to mix and match its numerals with an assortment of colorful rubber straps. It's a twist to the full ceramic color collection and another fashion must-have.

Continuing on its winning relationship with General Motors' Hummer, TechnoMarine has unveiled a 999-piece limited-edition Black Hummer Watch and a complementing white version. Its vehicle-like designs include a mega tire-tread rubber strap, a signature Hummer seven-spoke rim seconds hand and a 43-mm stainless-steel case resembling a Hummer grille.

The sleek two-tone stainless-steel PVD case has genuine Swiss chronograph movement and is water-resistant to 330 feet.

Meanwhile, endorsed by TechnoMarine's newest ambassador, Italian World Record free-diver Umberto Pelizzari, the Abyss 10 900 is capable of functioning at incredible depths. Featuring a steel case entirely filled with liquid silicone (which is denser than water), it is water-resistant to astounding depths as the inside of its case is unaffected by outside pressure.

This ultimate diver's watch also has a refractive index that enables one to see the dial and hands from any angle under water, a feature unavailable with a standard, air-filled watch. The battery compartment is uniquely designed so that it is accessible without breaching the silicone-filled core.

The newest addition to the TechnoMarine Sport Collection, the Abyss 10 900 is another example of TechnoMarine's commitment to style and innovative design.

TechnoMarine collections are available at the TechnoMarine Flagship Store at Greenbelt 3 (tel. 7573975); TechnoMarine Boutique at SM Megamall (6317491); Rafael Jewellery at Shangri-La Plaza Mall (6363398) and Makati Shangri-La Hotel (8138501); My Diamond at Glorietta 4 (7571086) and Gateway Mall (9124013); My Tempo at Robinson's Place Manila (5675209); Time Plus at Greenhills Theater Mall (7217868); and Washington Rockwell at Power Plant mall (8982288).

TRIO Abyss

technomarine
HUMMER

HUMMER

21-23
DEC 2006
WORLD TRADE CENTER
11:00am to 8:00pm
OVER 8,000 gift items and the best xmas bargains in town!
NOEL
"the discovery bazaar"
Christmas @2006
shop expo
FOR INQUIRIES CONTACT:
OUT UNLIMITED INC
6872966
687065
6870604
Best Finds
PRESENTED IN COOPERATION WITH
GMA
FOR THE BENEFIT OF
GMA
AAA Associate Missionaries of Assumption
MEDIA PARTNERS
INQUIRER
POST
923 JOEY
OFFICIAL BOOTH CONTRACTOR
CENTREX
SPONSORED BY AK MAXFACTOR Tefal SEAIR

TIMEX celebrity endorsers Angel Locsin and Piolo Pascual

Time to care

TO GIVE MORE VALUE FOR money this Christmas, Timex has launched its free Timex Fun Watch promo. For every purchase of a Timex watch worth P2,990, buyers will be given a free Timex Fun watch in any color and design available.

Sharing their blessings has become a major focus of Timex. And both its celebrity endorsers, Piolo Pascual and Angel Locsin, support Timex's commitment to provide disadvantaged kids better opportunities by building more classrooms and improving educational facilities in Barangay Iniwaran on the island of Masbate, and a daycare center facility for a small town in Camarines Norte.

Working hand in hand with Unicef, local government organizations and the Department of Education, Timex, with the help of Pascual and Locsin, and the brand's loyal customers was able to raise P1.5 million to build three classrooms and toilet and water facilities in Iniwaran to give residents safe water to drink.

Located in an isolated community, the Iniwaran school had a student-classroom ratio of 1:71, which put students at a learning disadvantage.

Particularly affected were primary school students aged 7-10 who had to make do with dilapidated buildings and classrooms. Another persistent problem was the lack of proper water and toilet facilities which resulted in the spread of diseases like diarrhea.

Part of the funds was also channeled into the construction of a daycare facility in a small town in Camarines Norte, which takes care of an average of 30 children per shift.

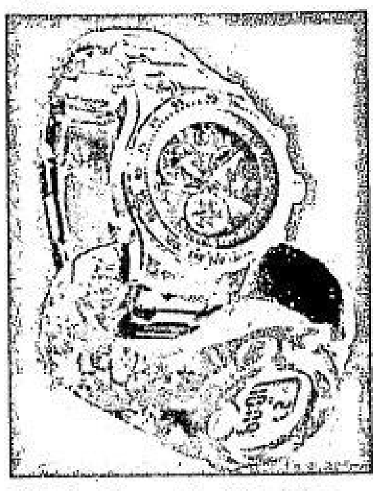
The daycare center enables the children to adapt to a learning environment and prepare them for formal schooling. This lessens the chances of them dropping out of grade school simply because they cannot cope with the academic setup.

Both celebrity endorsers of Timex are excited about the opportunity to show their gratitude to friends, colleagues and family by giving gifts.

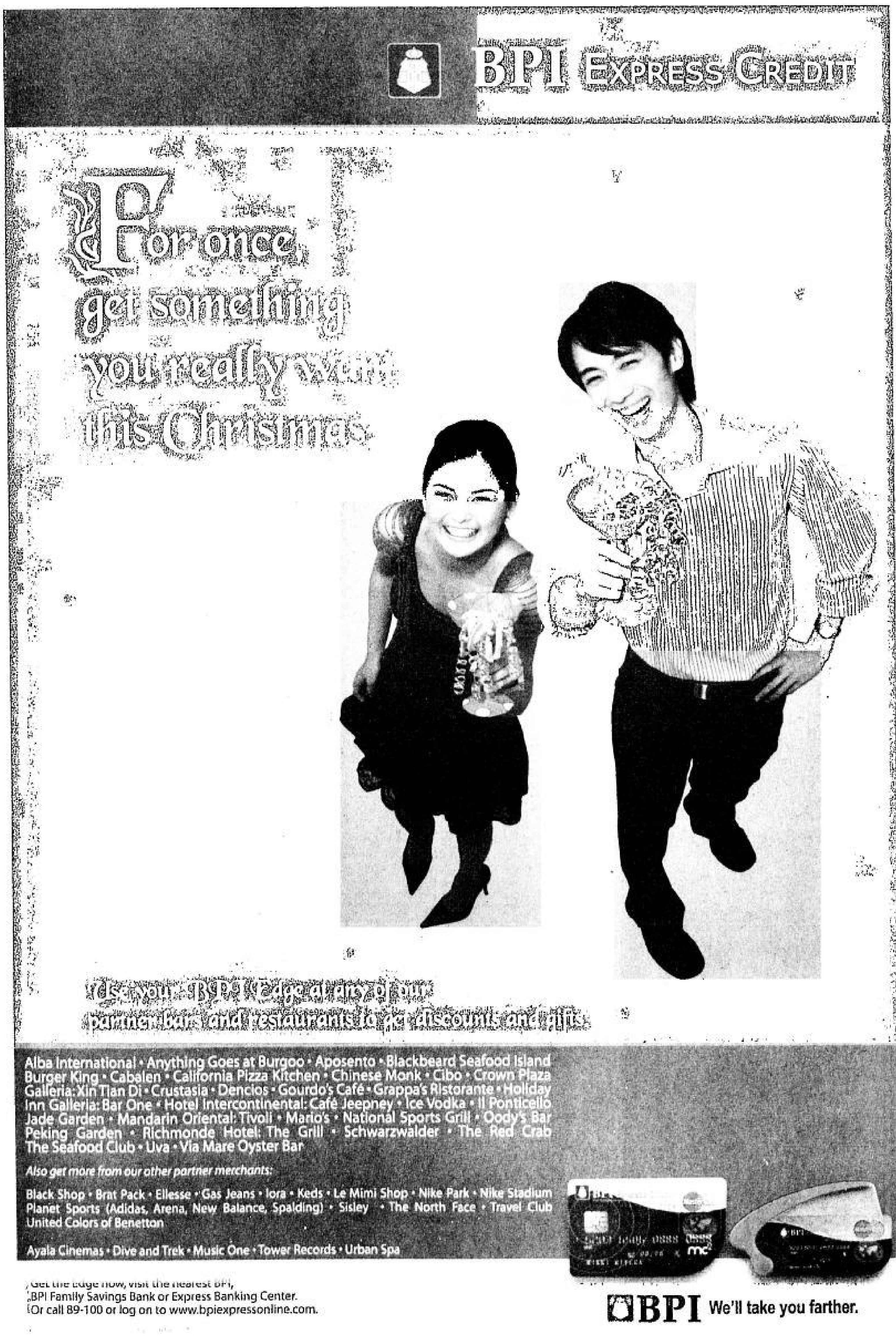
Pascual says he finds making a shopping list quite stressful. "I find more happiness in giving rather than receiving gifts."

Locsin, on the other hand, admits to being a last-minute Christmas shopper. "I'm a crammer!" She usually does it two or three days before Christmas and she claims: "I've always been able to complete my list in the nick of time."

The one thing that's sure to be on their gift list is available at all Timex stores or kiosks or Watch Republic outlets.



GET the Timex Fun Watch free with every P2,990 Timex watch


BPI EXPRESS CREDIT
For once, get something you really want this Christmas
Use your BPI Edge at any of our partner bars and restaurants to get discounts and gifts.
Alba International • Anything Goes at Burgoo • Aposento • Blackbeard Seafood Island Burger King • Cabalen • California Pizza Kitchen • Chinese Monk • Cibo • Crown Plaza Galleria: Xin Tian Di • Crustasia • Dencios • Gourdo's Café • Grappa's Ristorante • Holiday Inn Galleria: Bar One • Hotel Intercontinental: Café Jeepney • Ice Vodka • Il Ponticello Jade Garden • Mandarin Oriental: Tivoli • Mario's • National Sports Grill • Oody's Bar Peking Garden • Richmonde Hotel: The Grill • Schwarzwalder • The Red Crab The Seafood Club • Uva • Via Mare Oyster Bar
Also get more from our other partner merchants:
Black Shop • Brat Pack • Ellesse • Gas Jeans • Iora • Keds • Le Mimi Shop • Nike Park • Nike Stadium Planet Sports (Adidas, Arena, New Balance, Spalding) • Sisley • The North Face • Travel Club United Colors of Benetton
Ayala Cinemas • Dive and Trek • Music One • Tower Records • Urban Spa
Get the Edge now, visit the nearest BPI, BPI Family Savings Bank or Express Banking Center. Or call 89-100 or log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com.
BPI We'll take you farther.

LIFE-STYLED
Thelma Sioson San Juan

Pitoy bags Asean show

In an exclusive preview at Goldenberg Mansion, the couturier parades his collection

EVANGELINE Pascual models a Pitoy Moreno at Goldenberg Mansion, before President Macapagal-Arroyo, and, from left, Doris Magsaysay Ho, Secretary Alberto Romulo, Stella Araneta and Gina de Venecia.

PITOY WAS ALMOST BREAKING INTO A sob as he told me on the phone, "I've been crying the past two days."

I called him not knowing he was in the middle of the Mass for Stella, the daughter of Celia Laurel and the late Vice President Doy Laurel. Stella, 48, had just died of cancer. Doy and Celia are Pitoy's bosom friends. It was Pitoy who saw romance blossom between the two at the University of the Philippines.

All these years, I've gotten used to Pitoy being in a wake or Mass for the dear departed, for it seems not a week passes by without Pitoy going to one. In his book, it is a social obligation one must fulfill and he does so gladly. To this day he has Masses said for dear departed society columnists and editors like Lina Flor. It's amazing how he can keep track of dates—nuptial and funereal.

It's a Pitoy Moreno signature skill.

Anyway, apart from grieving for Stella, he had just come from the Mass for the former First Lady Vicky Quirino Delgado whose death last week of pneumonia left Manila society in shock. She was visiting a granddaughter in Amsterdam, Pitoy said, when she got sick and died.

Losing two loved ones one after the other, no matter that they were not kin—that's what put Pitoy in a grieving mood. Other than those, there was no reason for him to grieve, really.

Pitoy Moreno will end 2006 with the distinction of having bagged a most enviable assignment—to stage his collection for the Asean Summit Dec. 12 in Cebu. His collection will be presented at the Summit Gala dinner for 16 heads of state at Shangri-La Mactan in Cebu. The entire show will be directed by Lupita Kashiwahara, who's here from San Francisco.

According to Pitoy, the show was the idea of President Macapagal-Arroyo herself, and she wanted the country's beauty queens—past and present—to model the collection.

According to the fashion show choreographer, Raymund Villanueva, it was GMA herself who handpicked the beauty queen models. So poised to walk the runway in Cebu are Gemma Cruz Araneta, Gloria Diaz, Margie Moran Floirendo, Evangeline Pascual, Miriam Quiambao, Patti Betita, Issa Gonzalez Agana, Karla Bautista, Precious Quigaman—I hope I didn't miss any names.

Preview

Last Saturday afternoon, a sneak preview of the collection was held before a select crowd at the famous Goldenberg Mansion. To those not in the know, the Goldenberg Mansion (named after the family that owned it after the war) is the beautifully preserved home near Malacañang, which then First Lady Imelda Marcos assiduously outfitted for years with antiques, prize gifts from visiting dignitaries, and precious acquisitions from her trips.

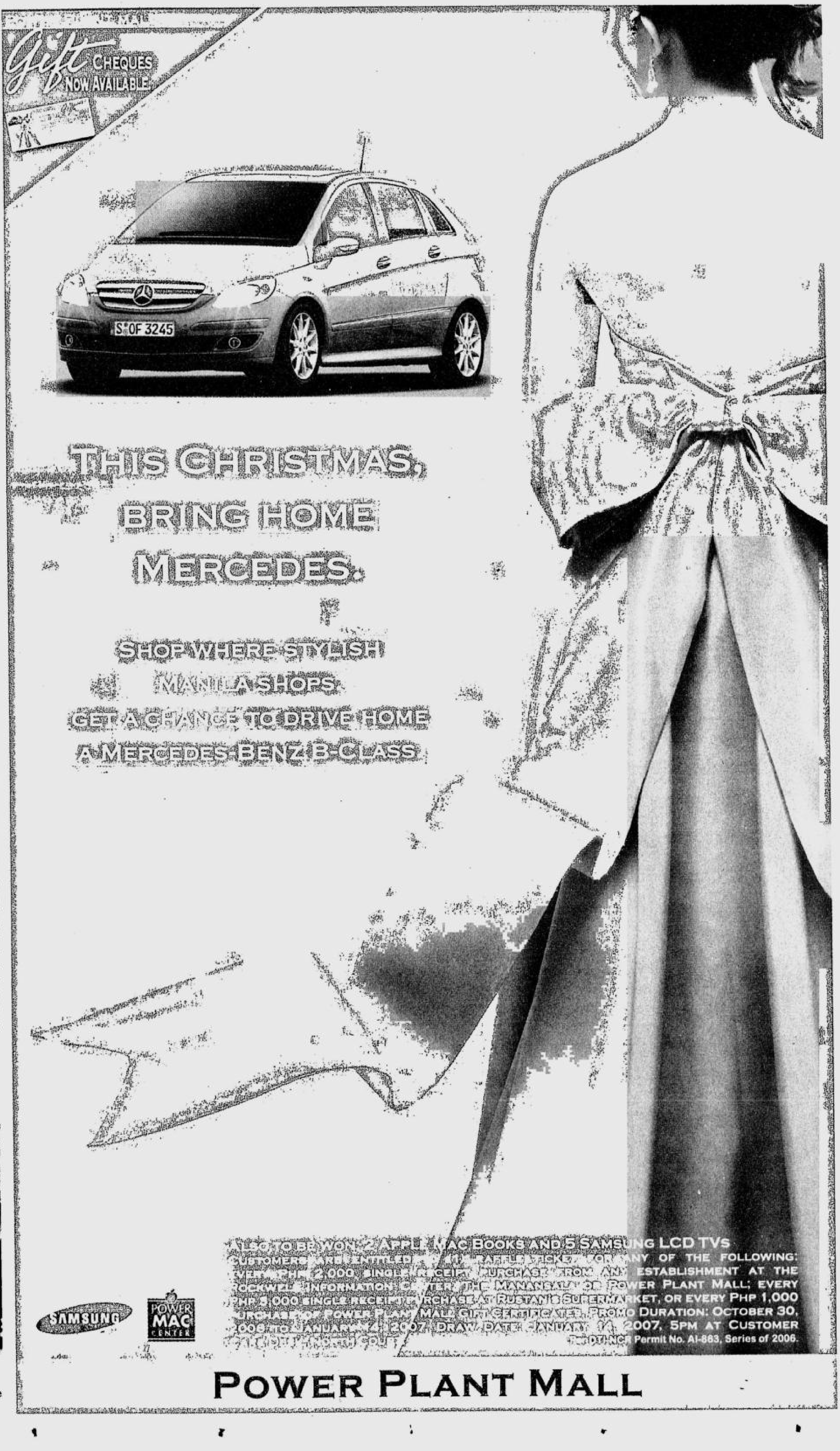
If there were a perfect backdrop for a rich Old World fashion collection, Goldenberg Mansion would be it. The models walked down the winding stairway. Among the young models was today's "it" guy, Dr. Hayden Kho Jr., who's identified with the Belo Medical Group brand.

(The antiques and artifacts at the Goldenberg were pretty much intact, I learned, except perhaps for a set or two, but let's not get into that.)

President Macapagal-Arroyo hosted the afternoon preview, an elegant affair in itself attended by a few of Pitoy's friends, such as Nene Quimson, Cristina Ponce Enrile, Ambassador to Spain Lani and Conchitina Bernardo, Boy and Paula Feria (Paula is the daughter of Pitoy's best friend, the late Corito Kalaw), Secretary Alberto Romulo, Ingrid Santamaria and daughter Crispy Laurel, who was among Pitoy's more popular signature models in the '80s, Carol Garcia, another Pitoy model/friend and beauty queen but who begged off from gracing the Cebu catwalk; Menchu Concepcion, Yaying Dragon, Nena Villanueva, Gerry Contreras, Johnny Valdez, Ramon and Frannie Jacinto, Mila How,

PITOY/ D3

MORENO said the show was President Macapagal-Arroyo's idea and she wanted past and present beauty queens to model the collection.



Gift CHEQUES NOW AVAILABLE

THIS CHRISTMAS, BRING HOME MERCEDES.

SHOP WHERE STYLISH MANILA SHOPS.
GET A CHANCE TO DRIVE HOME A MERCEDES-BENZ B-CLASS.

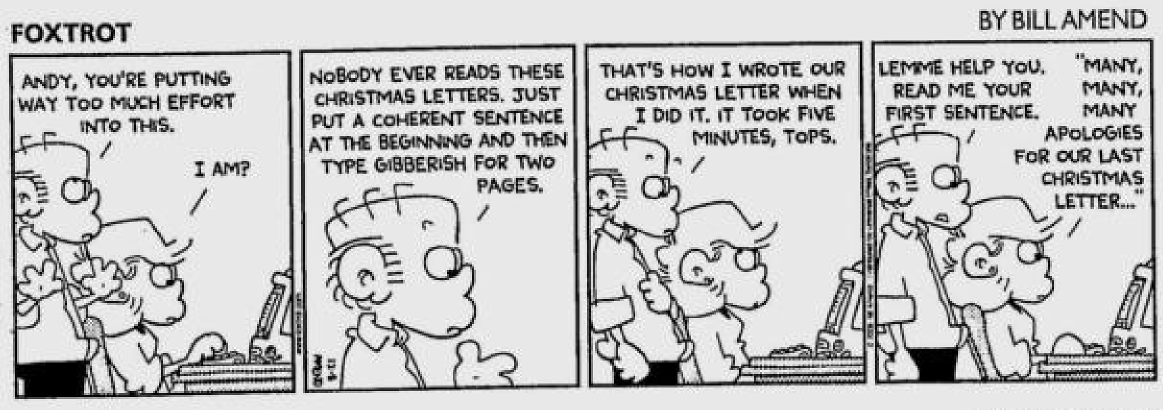
ALSO TO BE WON: 2 APPLE MAC BOOKS AND 5 SAMSUNG LCD TVS
CUSTOMERS ARE ENTITLED TO [illegible] RAFFLE TICKET FOR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING: EVERY PHP 2,000 SINGLE RECEIPT PURCHASE FROM ANY ESTABLISHMENT AT THE ROCKWELL INFORMATION CENTER, THE MANANSALA OR POWER PLANT MALL; EVERY PHP 5,000 SINGLE RECEIPT PURCHASE AT RUSTAN'S SUPERMARKET, OR EVERY PHP 1,000 PURCHASE OF POWER PLANT MALL GIFT CERTIFICATES. PROMO DURATION: OCTOBER 30, 2006 TO JANUARY 14, 2007. DRAW DATE: JANUARY 14, 2007, 5PM AT CUSTOMER [illegible] NORTH COURT
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. AI-863, Series of 2006.

POWER PLANT MALL

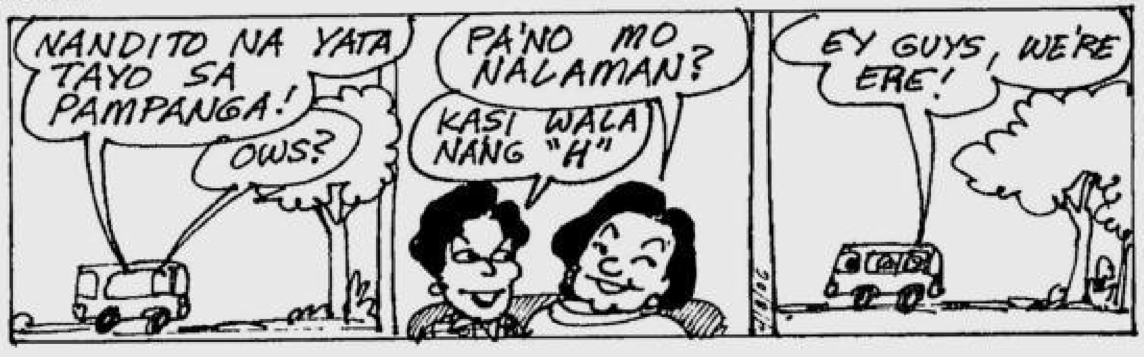
ComicRelief

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

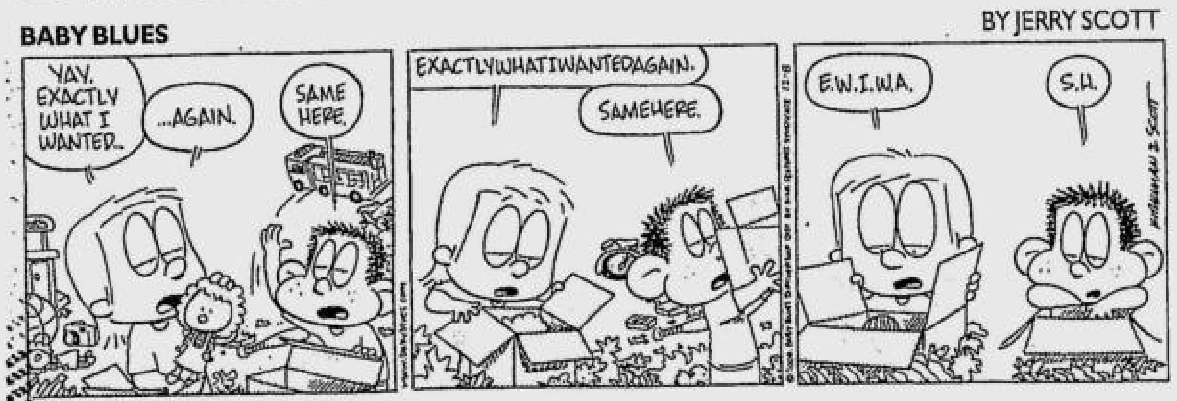
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


ANDY, YOU'RE PUTTING WAY TOO MUCH EFFORT INTO THIS.
I AM?
NOBODY EVER READS THESE CHRISTMAS LETTERS. JUST PUT A COHERENT SENTENCE AT THE BEGINNING AND THEN TYPE GIBBERISH FOR TWO PAGES.
THAT'S HOW I WROTE OUR CHRISTMAS LETTER WHEN I DID IT. IT TOOK FIVE MINUTES, TOPS.
LEMME HELP YOU. READ ME YOUR FIRST SENTENCE.
"MANY, MANY, MANY APOLOGIES FOR OUR LAST CHRISTMAS LETTER..."

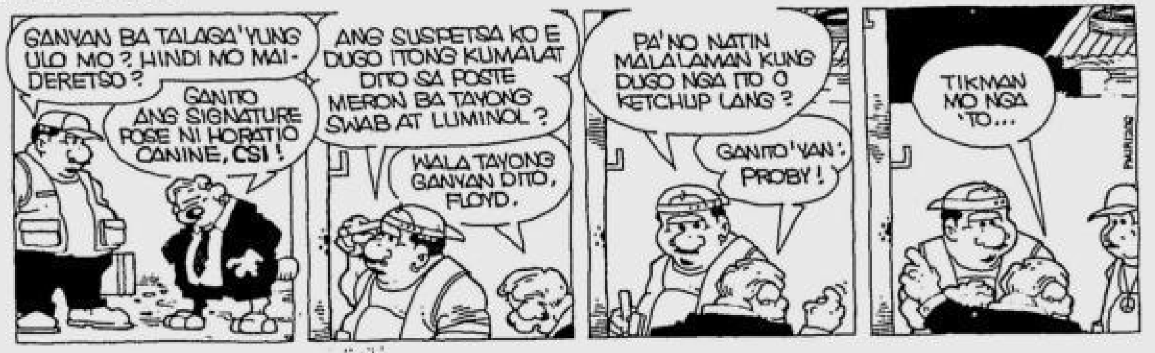
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


NANDITO NA YATA TAYO SA PAMPANGA!
OWS?
PA'NO MO NALAMAN?
KASI WALA NANG "H"
EY GUYS, WE'RE ERE!

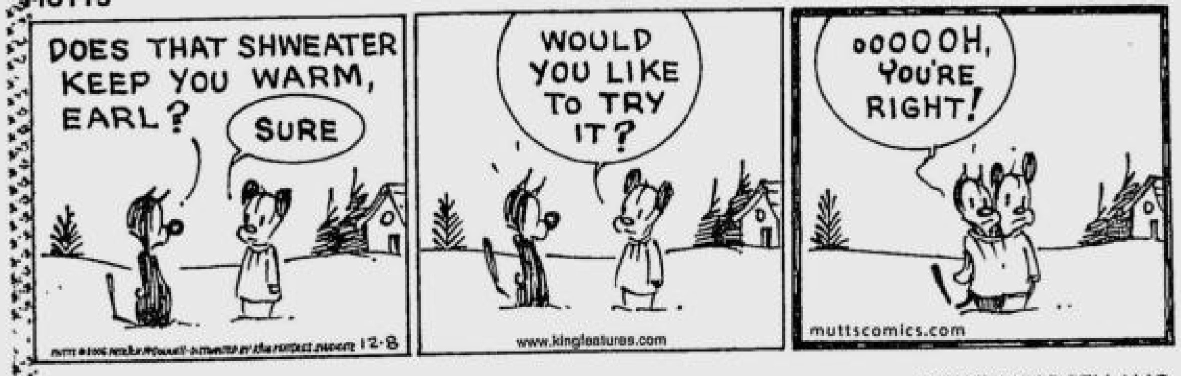
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


YAY. EXACTLY WHAT I WANTED..
...AGAIN.
SAME HERE.
EXACTLYWHATIWANTEDAGAIN.
SAMEHERE.
E.W.I.W.A.
S.H.

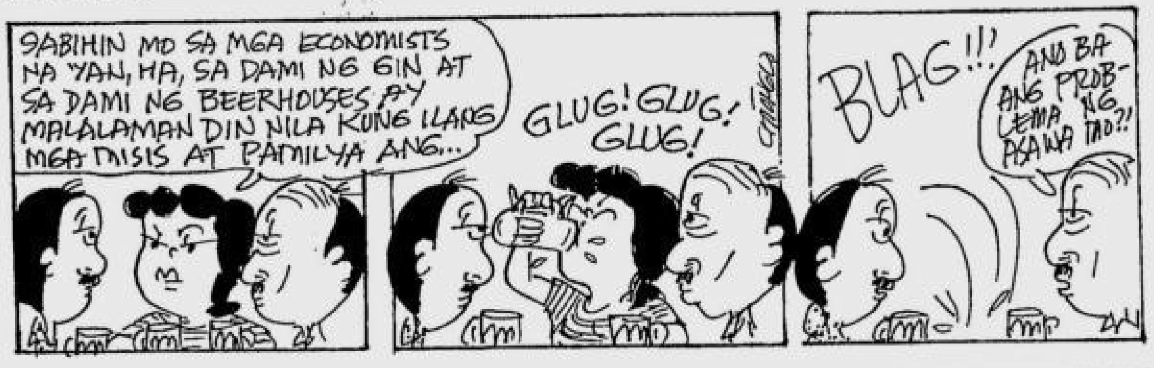
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


GANYAN BA TALAGA 'YUNG ULO MO? HINDI MO MAI-DERETSO?
GANITO ANG SIGNATURE POSE NI HORATIO CANINE, CSI!
ANG SUSPETSA KO E DUGO ITONG KUMALAT DITO SA POSTE MERON BA TAYONG SWAB AT LUMINOL?
WALA TAYONG GANYAN DITO, FLOYD.
PA'NO NATIN MALALAMAN KUNG DUGO NGA ITO O KETCHUP LANG?
GANITO 'YAN: PROBY!
TIKMAN MO NGA 'TO...

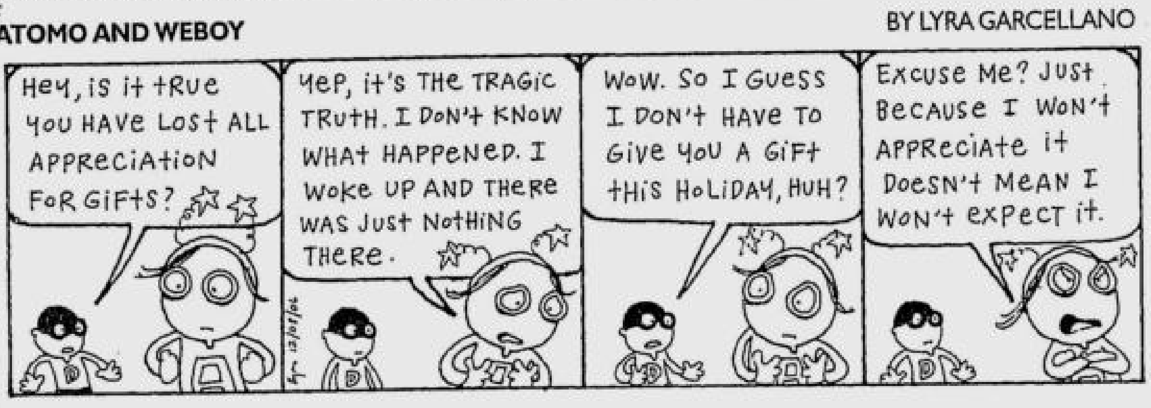
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


DOES THAT SHWEATER KEEP YOU WARM, EARL?
SURE
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY IT?
OOOOOH, YOU'RE RIGHT!
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com

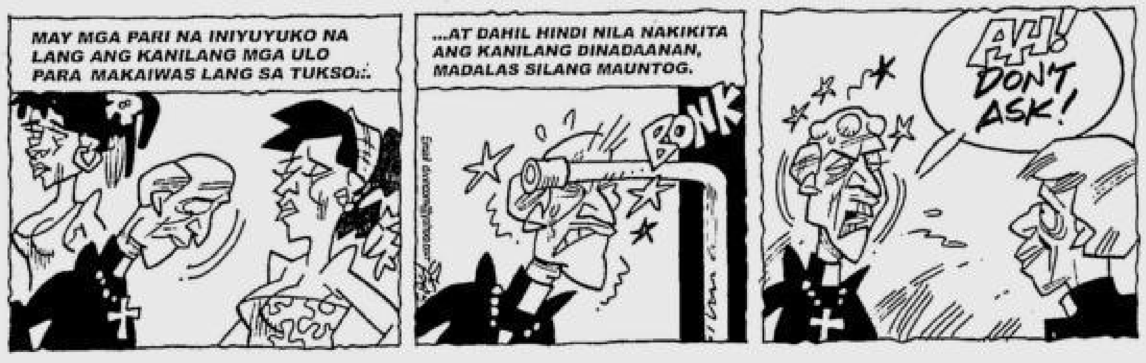
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SABIHIN MO SA MGA ECONOMISTS NA YAN, HA, SA DAMI NG GIN AT SA DAMI NG BEERHOUSES AY MALALAMAN DIN NILA KUNG ILANG MGA MISIS AT PAMILYA ANG...
GLUG! GLUG! GLUG!
BLAG!!!
ANO BA ANG PROBLEMA NG ASAWA TAO?!

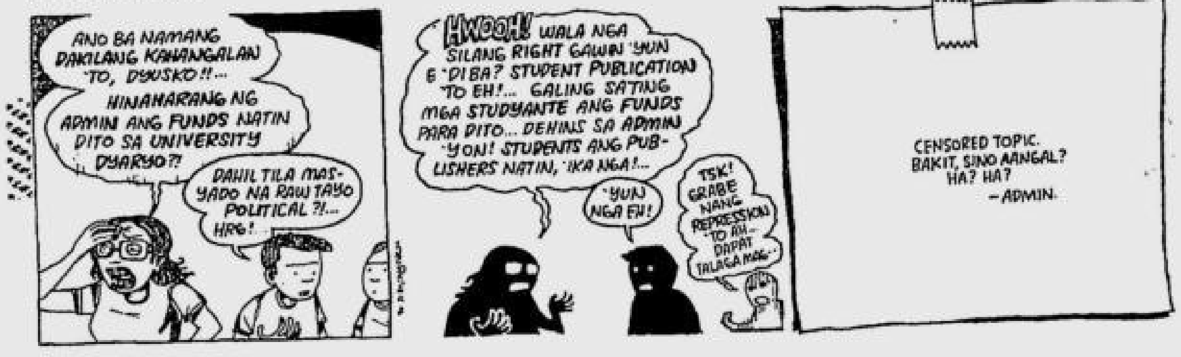
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, is it true you have lost all appreciation for gifts?
Yep, it's the tragic truth. I don't know what happened. I woke up and there was just nothing there.
Wow. So I guess I don't have to give you a gift this holiday, huh?
Excuse me? Just because I won't appreciate it doesn't mean I won't expect it.

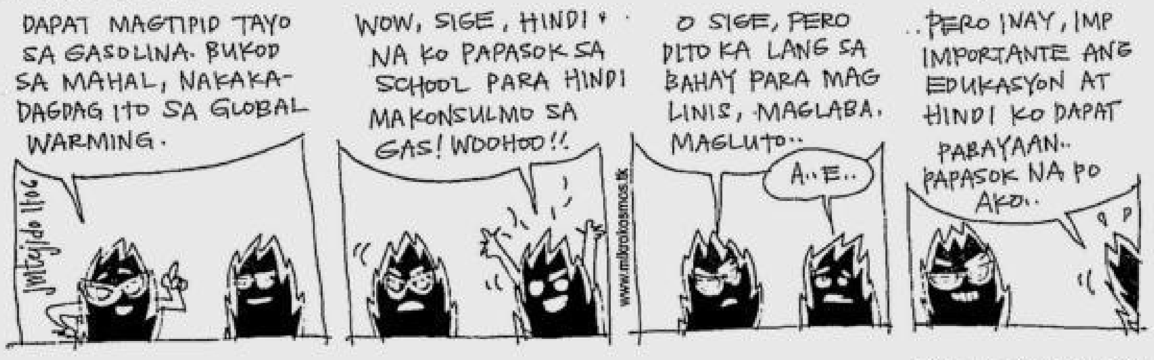
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MAY MGA PARI NA INIYUYUKO NA LANG ANG KANILANG MGA ULO PARA MAKAIWAS LANG SA TUKSO...
...AT DAHIL HINDI NILA NAKIKITA ANG KANILANG DINADAANAN, MADALAS SILANG MAUNTOG.
BONK
AH! DON'T ASK!

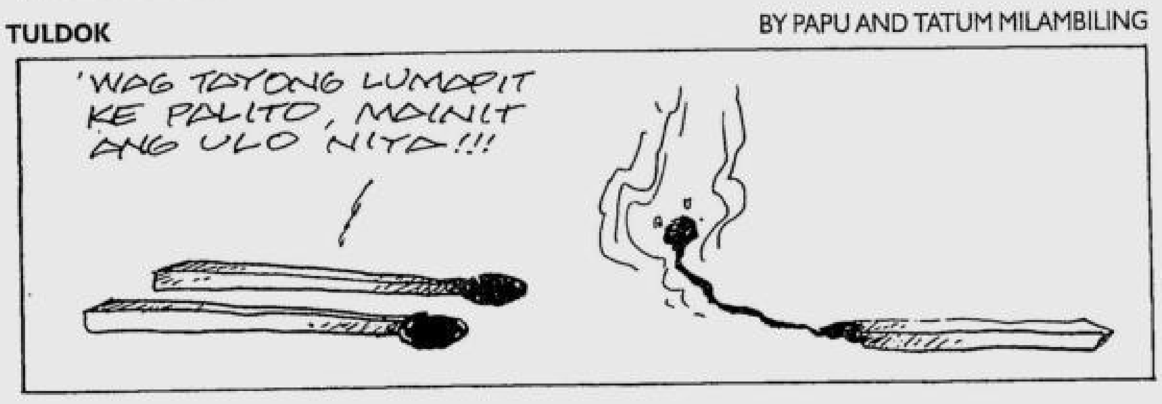
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


ANO BA NAMANG DAKILANG KAHANGALAN 'TO, DYUSKO!!... HINAHARANG NG ADMIN ANG FUNDS NATIN DITO SA UNIVERSITY DYARYO?!
DAHIL TILA MASYADO NA RAW TAYO POLITICAL?!... HRG!
HWOOH! WALA NGA SILANG RIGHT GAWIN 'YUN E 'DIBA? STUDENT PUBLICATION 'TO EH!... GALING SATING MGA STUDYANTE ANG FUNDS PARA DITO... DEHINS SA ADMIN 'YON! STUDENTS ANG PUBLISHERS NATIN, 'IKA NGA!...
'YUN NGA EH!
TSK! GRABE NANG REPRESSION 'TO AH... DAPAT TALAGA MAG-
CENSORED TOPIC. BAKIT, SINO AANGAL? HA? HA? —ADMIN.

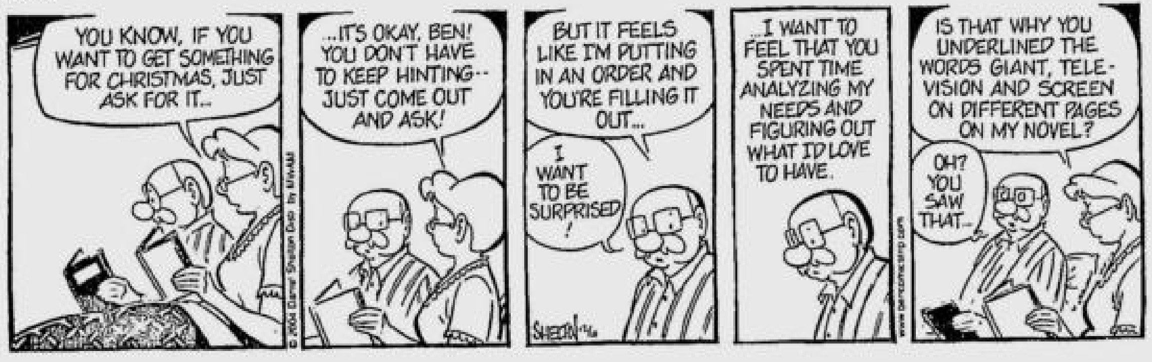
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DAPAT MAGTIPID TAYO SA GASOLINA. BUKOD SA MAHAL, NAKAKADAGDAG ITO SA GLOBAL WARMING.
WOW, SIGE, HINDI NA KO PAPASOK SA SCHOOL PARA HINDI MAKONSUMO SA GAS! WOOHOO!!
O SIGE, PERO DITO KA LANG SA BAHAY PARA MAG LINIS, MAGLABA, MAGLUTO..
A..E..
PERO INAY, IMPORTANTE ANG EDUKASYON AT HINDI KO DAPAT PABAYAAN.. PAPASOK NA PO AKO..
www.mikrokosmos.tk

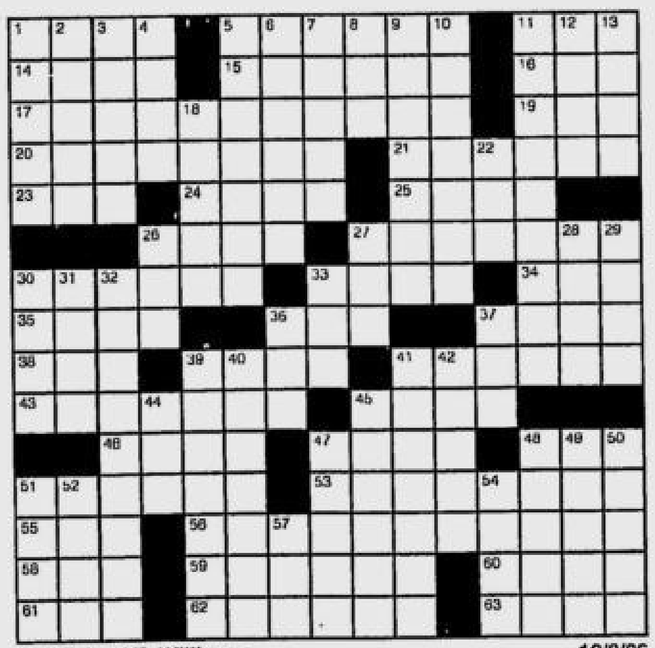
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'WAG TAYONG LUMAPIT KE PALITO, MAINIT ANG ULO NIYA!!!

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU KNOW, IF YOU WANT TO GET SOMETHING FOR CHRISTMAS, JUST ASK FOR IT...
...IT'S OKAY, BEN! YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP HINTING-- JUST COME OUT AND ASK!
BUT IT FEELS LIKE I'M PUTTING IN AN ORDER AND YOU'RE FILLING IT OUT...
I WANT TO BE SURPRISED!
...I WANT TO FEEL THAT YOU SPENT TIME ANALYZING MY NEEDS AND FIGURING OUT WHAT I'D LOVE TO HAVE.
IS THAT WHY YOU UNDERLINED THE WORDS GIANT, TELEVISION AND SCREEN ON DIFFERENT PAGES ON MY NOVEL?
OH? YOU SAW THAT...

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

12/8/06

ACROSS
1 Tilt to one side
5 Wound topper
11 Cul-de-__
14 Pisa's river
15 Lake near Utica
16 V.P. from Minn.
17 With 56A, make a tactless remark
19 Physicians' org.
20 "Malcolm X" director
21 Pointed stake
23 & so on
24 Put on
25 Speech subtlety
26 Highest quality
27 Brian of "Family Ties"
30 Bets
33 Train units
34 Old card game
35 Polo destination
36 Byrnes or Hall
37 Makes one
38 War casualties grp.
39 Corrida cries
41 Canal boats
43 Princess Di's maiden name
45 Lolita-ish
46 U.A.R. part
47 Ex-Spice Girl Halliwell
48 Bullpen stat
51 North Africa, mostly
53 Bestows a title upon
55 Miss. neighbor
56 See 17A
58 Tiriac of tennis
59 Slangy refusal
60 Mutt of Garfield's jokes
61 Shown the way
62 From the mountains of Peru
63 Nectar hunters

DOWN
1 Gap in time
2 Become violent
3 Bit of tomfoolery
4 Cozy corner
5 Like peekaboo shoes
6 Remove from office by vote
7 Pass on (to)
8 Short life story
9 Orphan's new parent
10 Countries
11 Hurry up!
12 Lamenter's words
13 Chew the fat
18 Dated later
22 Brain, spinal cord, etc.
26 Actress Arthur
27 Naughty
28 Mine find
29 Minus money
30 Rolls of bills
31 On-the-double letters
32 Help
33 LPs, updated
36 Always, to Keats
37 Dryly humorous
39 Sweet potato
40 Beirut's country
41 Corbin of "L.A. Law"
42 Self-evident truth
44 FDR's Blue Eagle
45 Finger Lake
47 Wish granter
48 Duck past
49 Get back to even
50 Cigar remains
51 Boat canvas
52 Medicinal plant
54 Ninnyhammer
57 Offbeat

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

W	I	G	■	S	C	A	R	■	A	C	C	E	S	S
E	N	E	■	T	A	P	E	■	T	A	H	I	T	I
I	F	T	H	E	R	E	S	■	B	L	I	N	D	S
R	E	T	O	L	D	■	I	N	A	L	L	■	■	■
D	R	O	L	L	■	A	N	Y	T	H	I	N	G	A
■	■	■	D	A	U	B	■	E	S	O	■	A	R	M
E	T	E	S	■	S	E	A	■	■	M	E	D	I	A
D	E	N	T	I	S	T	H	A	T	E	S	I	T	S
E	P	S	O	M	■	■	A	G	A	■	T	A	S	S
M	I	O	■	M	S	T	■	O	M	A	R	■	■	■
A	D	R	O	O	P	I	N	G	■	R	A	M	O	N
■	■	■	A	D	I	E	U	■	S	E	D	U	C	E
P	U	R	S	E	R	■	M	U	S	T	A	C	H	E
B	R	U	I	S	E	■	E	S	T	E	■	H	O	D
S	I	E	S	T	A	■	N	E	S	S	■	O	A	S

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12/8/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Whatever you do, you do it intensely with all of your being. There are no halfway measures for you. You have tons of energy! People like you because you're friendly, fascinating and energetic. In turn, you seek out those who are different and stimulating. The year ahead will focus on partnerships and close friendships. Enjoy good times with everyone.

Birthdate of: Teri Hatcher, actress; Jim Morrison, singer/songwriter/poet; Reed Johnson, baseball outfielder.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your appreciation of beauty is definitely heightened now. Give yourself the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of arts and crafts, painting, sculpture, parks, architecture and beautiful places.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): By nature, yours is a very sensuous sign. You like good food and good drink. Today, you feel very passionate about a romantic contact. (Be still, my beating heart.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Close friendships and partnerships are very important to you today. They can deepen in a very meaningful way. You can understand the transforming power of love!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You have wonderful ideas about how to make improvements at work. You see better ways of doing things, and you also see better ways for everybody else to get along.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a very romantic, passionate day for most of you. Some of you can also use this energy in an artistic way, or to compete in sports as well. You're pumped!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You can definitely make improvements or repairs to where you live today. Someone in the family feels very strongly about a particular issue today. You have to respect this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your ability to influence, sell, market, teach and act is marvelous today! You dazzle others with your words. This is because you really believe what you're saying!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're very determined about financial matters today. If you want to buy something, you'll buy it. You'll work very hard to earn money as well.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Romantic relationships are quite intense today. This is definitely a time to express your passionate feelings for others. Actually, you feel passionately about everything today (not just romance).

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your research skills are tops now. You will definitely enjoy digging for secrets today. You want to get to the bottom of something.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a wonderful day to schmooze and enjoy good times with groups and friends. You feel a strong affection for someone today. Hopefully, this feeling is mutual.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): It's easy to make a great impression on others today, especially bosses, parents and VIPs. People think you're the cat's meow. (You might as well milk this for all its worth.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

8		2						1
			5					
				3	4			9
		7		1			8	
		8				7		
	9			5		3		
3			6	4				
					9			
4						9		5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

12/08

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	9	6	1	8	5	2	3	4
8	4	5	3	7	2	6	9	1
2	1	3	9	6	4	5	8	7
3	8	9	4	2	1	7	6	5
1	5	7	8	9	6	3	4	2
6	2	4	5	3	7	8	1	9
5	7	1	6	4	3	9	2	8
9	6	2	7	1	8	4	5	3
4	3	8	2	5	9	1	7	6

Difficulty Level ★★★

Pitoy bags Asean show

From page D1

Raul Manzano, Marissa Fernan (who flew back to Cebu right after, where a million and one Summit chores awaited her), Gemma Cruz Araneta, Gloria Diaz, Elvira Luym, Tina Monzon Palma, Chit Lijauco.

In her brief remarks, the President thanked the guests who were working hard for the Summit, starting with Secretary Romulo, Stella Araneta who had gathered the beauty queens, and Marissa Fernan, who was rallying support from the Cebu community for the fashion show.

The gala program with the Pitoy Moreno show, the President said, is a means to show the region and the world the special advantage of the Philippines, the people's world-class creativity that is our competitive advantage. The great Filipino talent will be on center stage during the summit, she said.

Asean is focused on economic and regional integration, and yet the meeting of Asean and East Asian leaders provides a significant forum for discussing economic, security and humanitarian issues. In fact, what will make our Asean and East Asian Summit unique is that we will have a bigger dose than other summits of discussions on humanitarian issues. That's why our theme is one caring and sharing community. Asean will be one caring and sharing community by 2015.

The President also said that while the country has been spared from the disasters that struck East Asia, such as the tsunami and Sars, nonetheless it has also been hit by typhoons and disasters. "We call on our people to remain strong in coping and overcoming this tragedy," she said.

The collection was inspired by the costumes of the Asean countries, but using Philippine materials, such as *piña* and *jusi*.

Metro Society editor Raul Manzano was present during the Saturday afternoon affair.

With Cultural Center of the Philippines president Nes Jardin hosting the show, the brief but tasteful affair was over before dark.

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- 30 orders Fruit Jello

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TEAL Tokyo palm bandeau dress

Take me high and low

High fashion hits mass retail market

By Cheche V. Moral

THE REAL ACTION HAPPENS ON THE high street. So popular designers formerly selling their wares for thousands of dollars are traversing into the uncharted territory of mass retail.

There were Stella McCartney's and Karl Lagerfeld's sensational collaborations with H&M. Roland Mouret's 10-piece collection for Gap reportedly resulted in retail mayhem as soon as it hit the racks—no different from how well the Dutch duo Viktor & Rolf's H&M collection, which included a wedding gown, was received.

There are unconfirmed reports that Chloe's former creative director, Phoebe Philo, is also on Gap's design team, this amid Kate Moss' much-hyped teamup with the British brand Topshop, which will soon launch the supermodel's collection for the label.

In the local front, consumers are getting their fair dose of high fashion as popular high-street labels continue to arrive on Philippine shores.

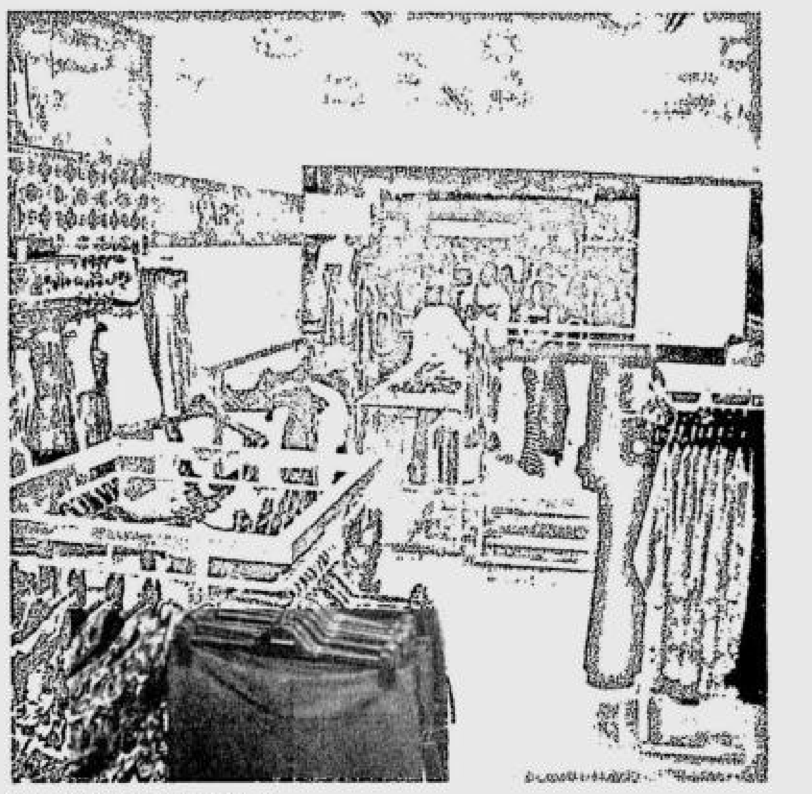
The same company that brought Topshop and Dorothy Perkins here has just opened the first store of Warehouse, another British label, at The Podium in Mandaluyong City.

The 30-year-old Warehouse label offers similarly trendy clothing and accessories with a decidedly younger vibe than Dorothy Perkins, but for a more mature market than Topshop's.

Warehouse's current collection consists of its own permutations of fashions from the fall runways-Mod-era shifts, wide-leg pants, jabot tops, miniskirts and dresses and A-line coats. Animal prints, checks and plaids find their way among solid red, black, beige and camel pieces. Oversize '80s-style tops, slouchy knits find their match in skinny jeans and leggings.

'Tis the season of dresses, as reported by the New York Times. Designer jeans paired with dressy tops just wouldn't do any longer that more women are opting for dresses for the holidays. At Warehouse, women will find chic wrap satin dresses, belted Japanese-print frocks, sexy halter looks and other styles in metallic materials.

Warehouse also has a collection of skinny and wide belts, sequined evening purses, scarves and hats.



WAREHOUSE boutique

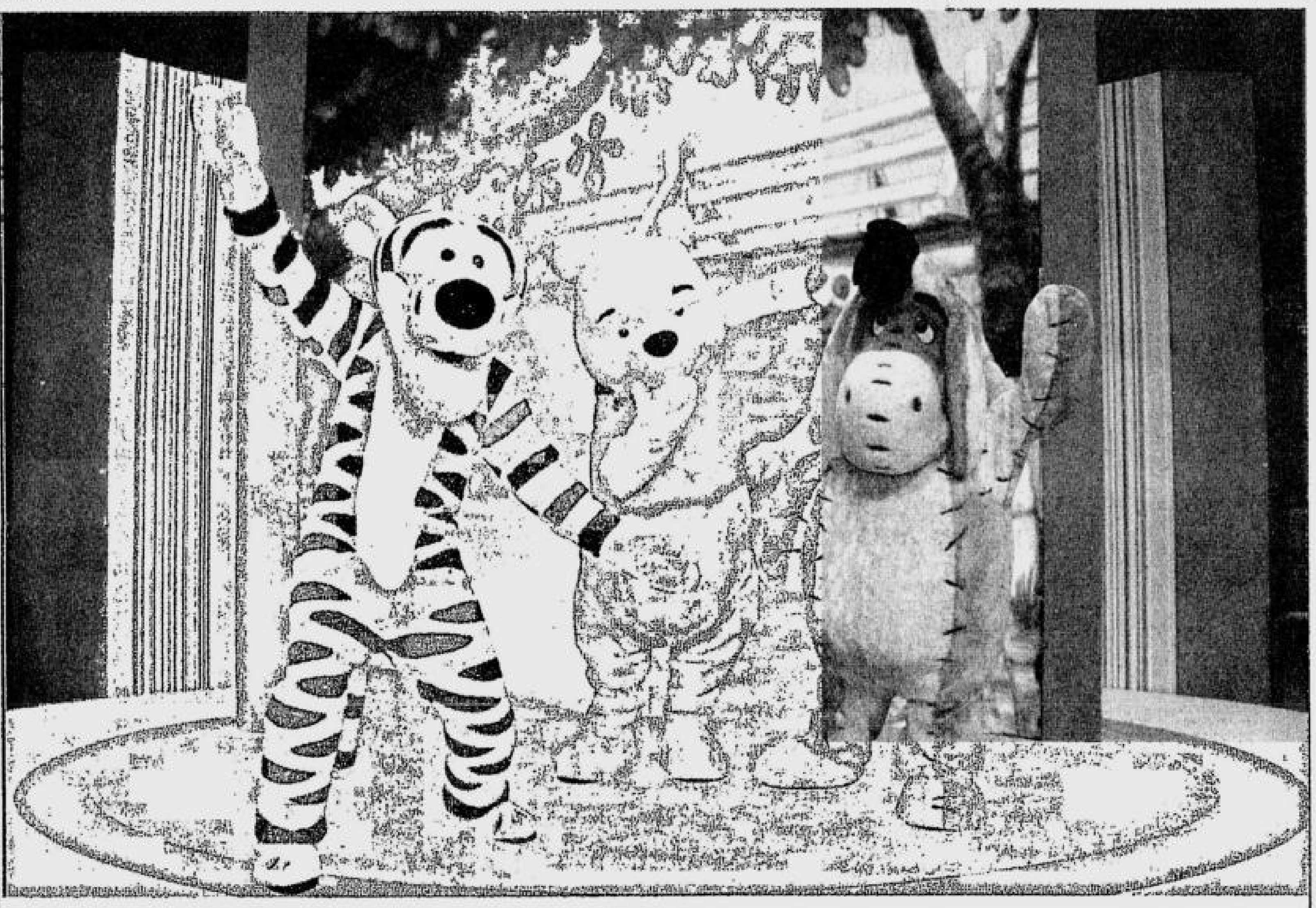
INQUIRER PHOTO / AUGUST DELA CRUZ

PINK wrap dress satin dress

V-FRONT dress, metallic obi wrap belt

FOIL print leggings, metallic sequin empire dress

Disney Winnie the Pooh
Always Together, Friends Forever!
Celebrating 80 years of adventures



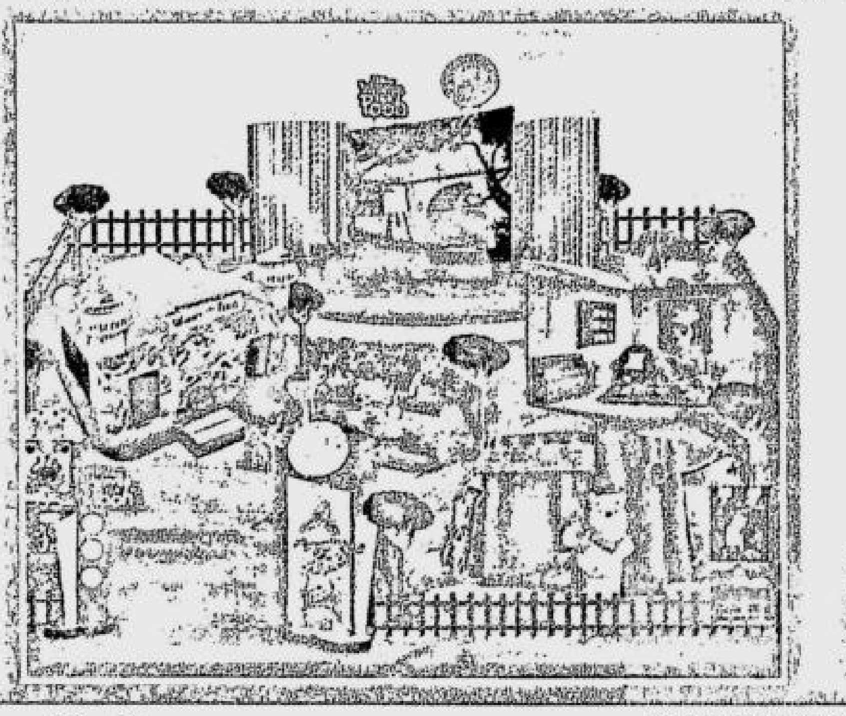
Meet & Greet Pooh, Tigger & Eeyore

SM Mall of Asia
Music Hall
December 8-12, 2006
12pm 2pm 4pm 6pm

SM Megamall
Activity Center
December 15-18, 2006
12pm 2pm 4pm 6pm

*Admission is free!

Set off on an Adventure in Hundred Acre Wood



Explore Pooh's house, enjoy fun games in Piglet's house, bounce like Tigger in Pooh inflatable, play character dress-up and have your pictures taken and much more...

*One entry ticket for a minimum purchase of P300 of any Disney products in SM Department Stores and Toy Kingdom
Per DTI #4971

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Contributing editor
Ria Francisq-Prieto

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

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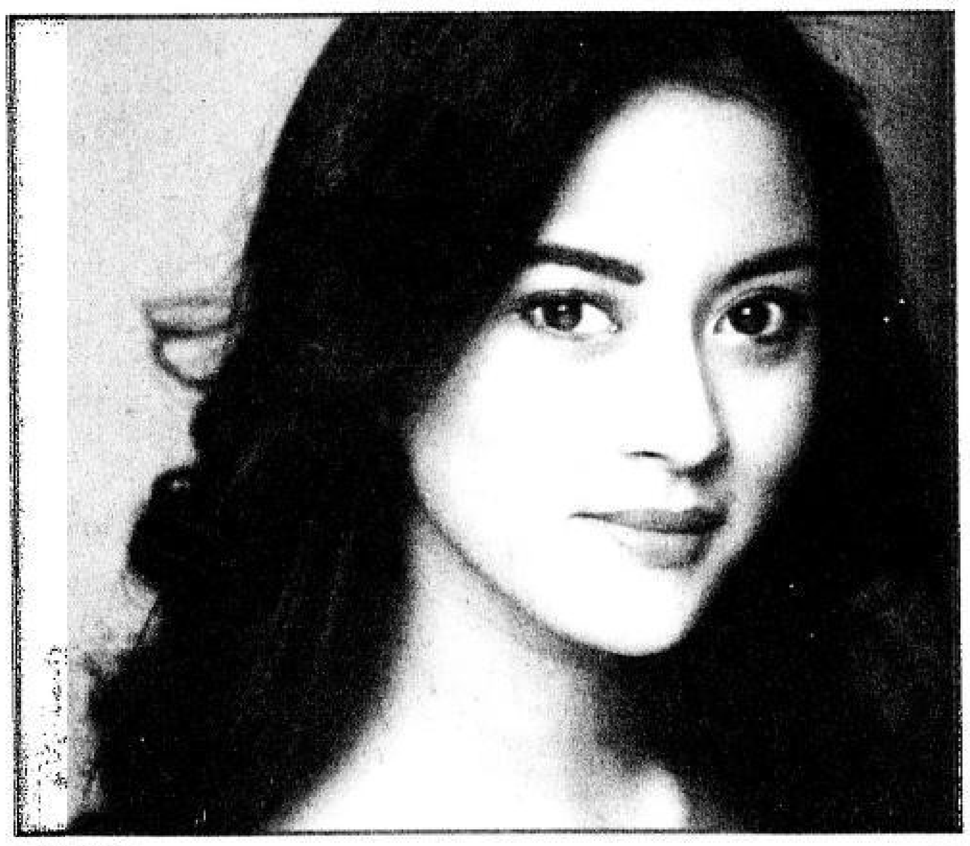
Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

BEAUTY



EYEBROWS brushed upward with clear brow gel and completely filled in with dark brown pencil à la Brooke Shields in the '80s. A very current look for 2006-07!

Last week's credits!

SPRING/SUMMER '07
MAKEUP TRENDS
PHOTOS:
PAOLO PINEDA
CONCEPT, STYLING,
HAIR/MAKEUP:
JIGS MAYUGA OF
L'OREAL PARIS
MODEL: MICHELLE
QUIZON-BALINGHASAY

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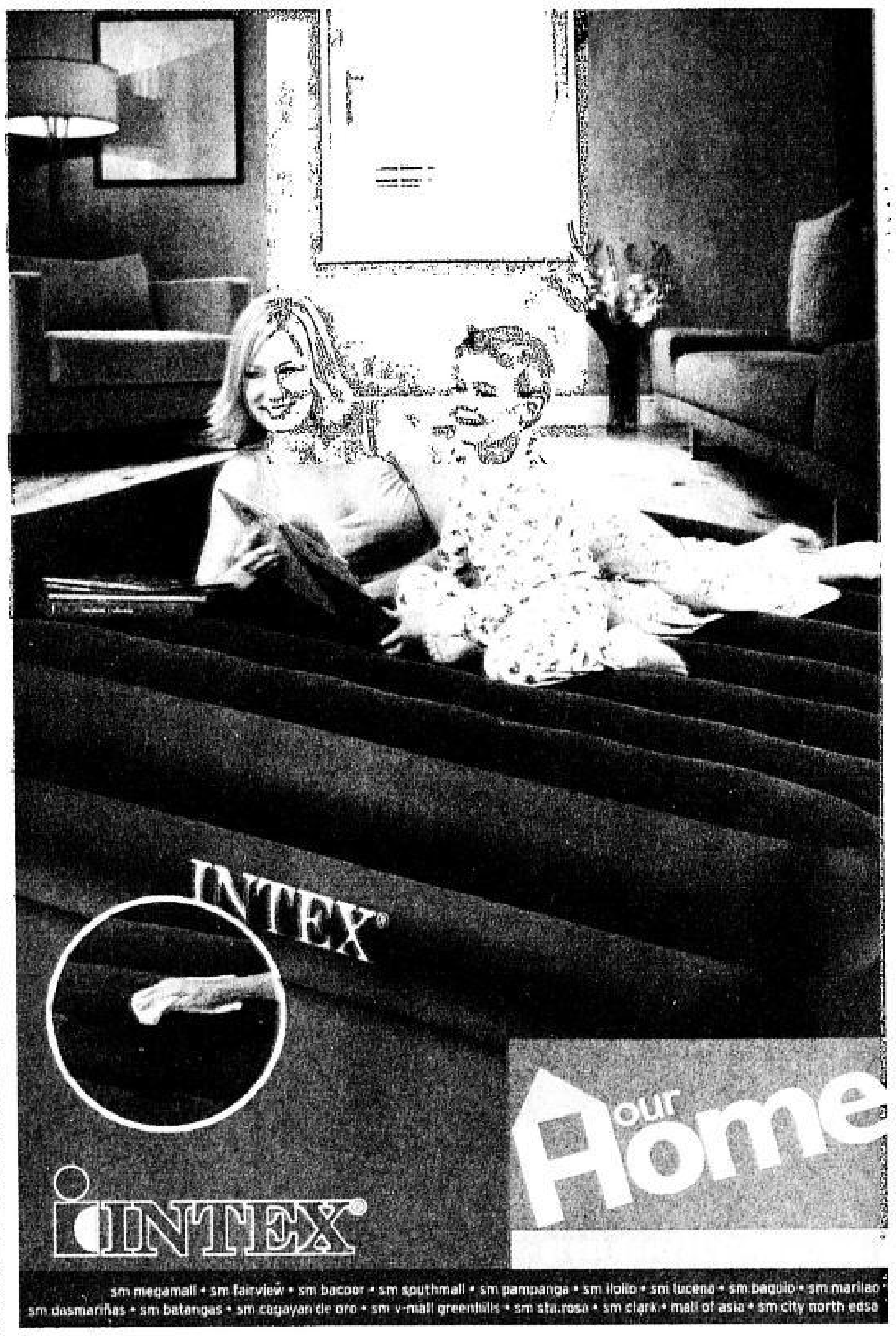

sm megamall • sm fairview • sm bacoor • sm southmall • sm pampanga • sm iloilo • sm lucena • sm baguio • sm marilao
sm dasmariñas • sm batangas • sm cagayan de oro • sm v-mall greenhills • sm sta.rosa • sm clark • mall of asia • sm city north edsa

Snapshots of Christmas
from Gain Plus ADVANCE
and Gain School Advance
Gain Plus ADVANCE
Gain School Advance
ROSCO

Have your family pictures taken with Rosco the Christmas Bear and win exciting prizes with every purchase of any GainPlus or GainSchool product.

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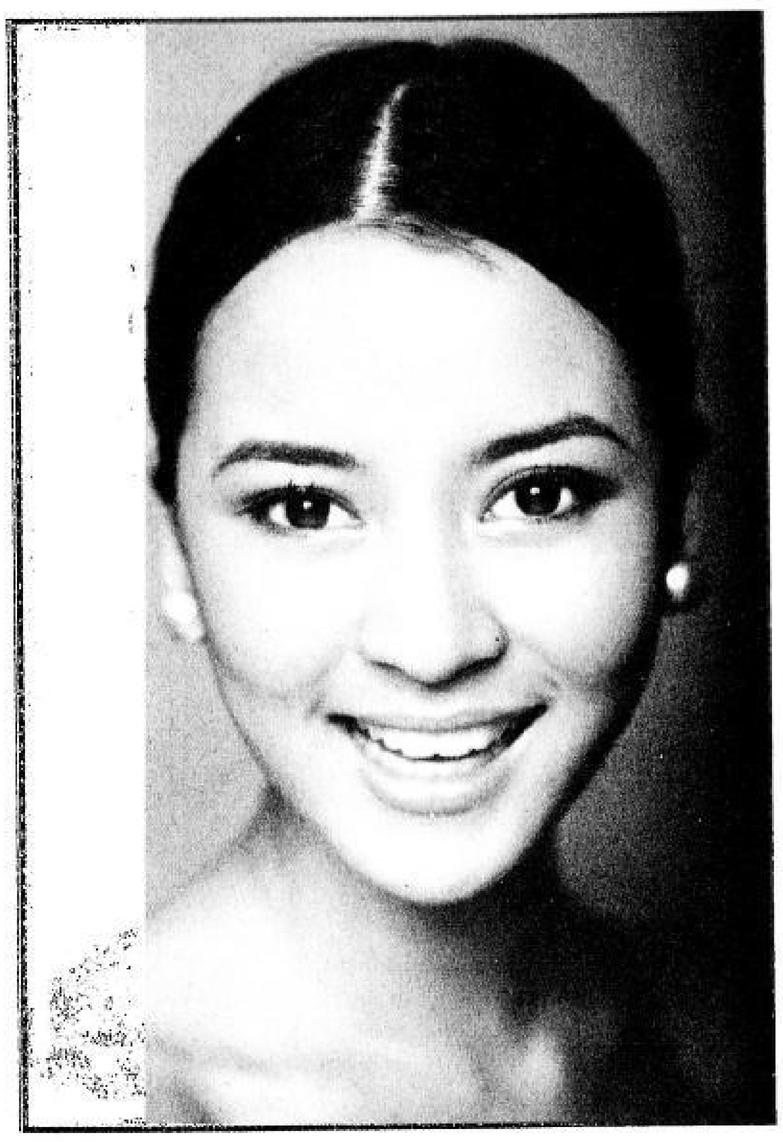
• SM cebu* • SM Sta. Rosa* • NCCC Mall Davao
*In partnership with Watsons

See flyers for more details

Breastmilk is still best for babies up to 2 years.
Per BFAD-DOH permit # 1340 s.2005

Abbott
A Promise for Life



BIANCA with brows naturally filled using P.A.C. (Professional Art Cosmetics) Eyebrow Pencil

Make sure to choose a shade lighter than your natural hair color so it works as a shadow and doesn't come off as too obvious

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

Know thy eyebrows

YES, THE TREND when it comes to our brows is "the thicker the better," but we do have our own preference, and by the way it is not always smart to follow a trend because at times it may not even suit us.

So remember the first rule in beauty: Know thy face.

This actually means you need to study it. Look in the mirror and find out what your best asset is and play it up. Learn to focus on the positive and forget the features you wish to change because, obviously, that would be very hard to do unless you consider going under the knife, which is another story in itself.

And if you learn to play up your best feature, you will be having too much fun and enough confidence to say, "Yes, I've got it together!"

Take your brows, for example. Is it well groomed?

If you are happy with the shape of your brows, then it may mean just plucking the stray hair or two on your own every now and then. However, if the hairs seem all over the place, it is best to go to your fave salon and have them threaded.

I enjoy going to Emphasis or Franck. Provost to have this done. It is a painful process, but new hair grows back slower, and then I just pluck them out.

It is wise to invest in good makeup tools. Check out Tweezerman in Essenses, which comes in different designs, the better for your ease of use.

Some of us, however, have hardly any hair to pluck or thin out, so an eye brow pencil filler is what's needed. Try P.A.C. (Professional Art Cosmetics) Eyebrow Pencil, which Bianca Gonzales uses to fill in thin spaces or to thicken her brows.

When filling your eyebrows, make sure to choose a shade lighter then your natural hair color so it works as a shadow and doesn't come off as too obvious. I may sound like a broken record, but when trying something new or doing something you are not too sure of, go to a counter and have a pro do it on you first so you know how it is done.

Consider having your brows lightened when you get your hair lightened. Normally, the shade used on your hair will also be swiped on your brows, but be very careful with this. If you have sensitive skin, this method may not advisable. Make sure you ask for lighteners specific for the brows.

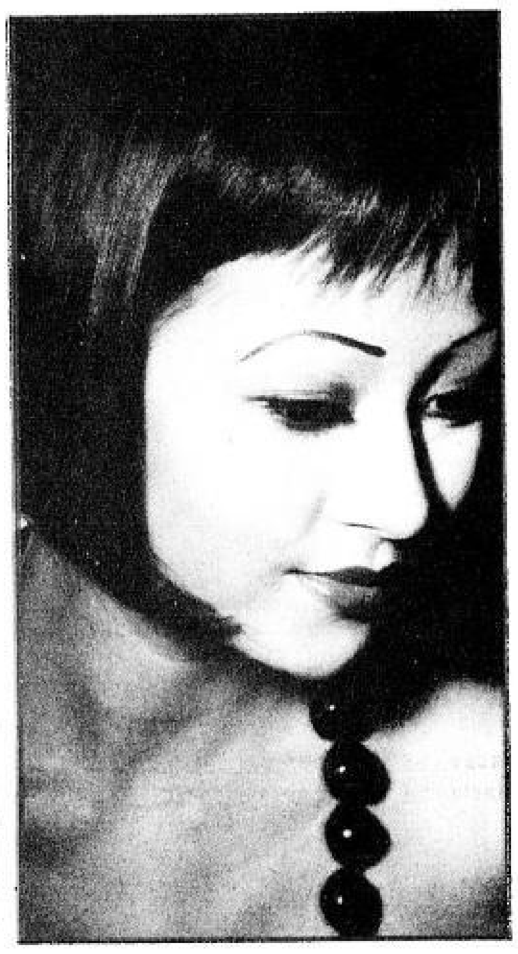
If your skin is not that sensitive, you can actually get away with this. It would take at least three minutes before your brows begin to lighten since brow hair is much finer.

If you want to do this yourself, try Sally Hansen, a brand that carries an eyebrow lightening cream. It's available at the Landmark and SM. When using these lightening kits, don't leave it on too long and make sure you have time to stay in front of the mirror so you can check the color change periodically. Note that darker results are better than too-light ones.

Truth is, I love this trend toward thicker brows since it actually makes us girls look younger. That said, you decide what suits you best.

TAKE inspiration from the makeup of Naomi Campbell in the '90s. Lighten eyebrows by either bleaching or by using a blond brow gel. To intensify this look, rim the eyes thickly using black kohl pencil and keep lips muted.

PHOTOS BY: PAOLO PINEDA
CONCEPT, STYLING, MAKEUP BY: JIGS MAYUGA OF L'OREAL PARIS
HAIR BY: VIANNEY GUESE FOR L'OREAL PARIS STUDIO LINE
MODEL: BIANCA GONZALES



20'S PERIOD look with Bianca in a wig and her natural eyebrows completely covered with gum and wax and new droopy, thin eyebrows drawn on top of them. The look exudes Old World glamour and mystery.

Natural beauty

By Marta Araneta
Contributor

Maite Araneta, one of Manila's most beautiful women, shares her beauty secrets

BEAUTIFUL, friendly and sweet are some of the adjectives that come to mind when describing the highly versatile Maite Araneta.

Most people cannot believe that this radiant woman is already in her mid-30s! Gifted with the genes of eternal youth, Maite has flawless and smooth complexion. Her temperament is comforting and pleasant.

Originally a graduate of De La Salle University, Maite majored in Business Management and Psychology. Her love for interior design led her to the prestigious Philippines School of Interior Design (PSID). She married longtime sweetheart Santi Araneta, Chair of Digiprint, in 2001, and has since been doing freelance interior design consulting.

One of Manila's most beautiful women, Maite shares her beauty secrets below.

How do you maintain your beauty?

I invest in skin care. Right now, I'm using the Vitamin C line of Murad. It specifically targets sun-damaged skin. I've spent a lot of time under the sun and hopefully this will help minimize all the damage! Also, after I shower I apply Neutrogena Body Oil while my skin is still damp, and I just pat it dry. It's actually one of the most effective ways to keep your skin moisturized.

Are you for the sun or anti-?

I love the sun, but I am religious now about sunblock. I alternate between Murad and SkinCeuticals, depending on what I'm doing that day. If I will be indoors most of the day, I use Murad Essential-C Day Moisture SPF 15. If I'm going to be outdoors more, I use SkinCeuticals sunblock SPF 45. When I go to the beach I make a conscious effort to reapply sunblock every two hours. Instead of tanning in the beach, I use self-tanners. My personal favorites are Fake Bake by Tomas LLC and Lancome Sôleil. Fake Bake has the most natural-looking color I've ever seen in a self-tanner, but it's difficult to find. Sôleil is a good alternative and is much easier to apply.

Do you have a fitness routine?

I do a combination of cardio, weights and Pilates. I try to do some form of cardio everyday, either on the treadmill, bicycle or the elliptical machine. I also lift light weights twice a week to keep myself toned. But my favorite form of exercise is really my Pilates. I find that you get lean as opposed to bulky muscles, not to mention it's great for the abs! I notice that when I exercise regularly, I feel better and more relaxed.

What fragrance do you use?

My husband is very sensitive to smell, so I only use S3, a baby cologne, and Bvlgari Baby Cologne.

Do you have a skin care regimen?

Before leaving the house in the morning, I make sure I apply my sunblock. I also use the Essential-C Eye Cream because it is also a sunblock for the eye area. I am very particular about washing my face before sleeping. At night, I apply Murad Essential-C Daily Renewal Complex, which is supposed to reverse sun damage. I then use the Murad Essential-C Night Moisture. It's a heavier cream, but my skin feels really nice and soft in the morning. Also, I use an AHA (alpha hydroxyl acid) in my t-zone before I sleep. It prevents breakouts and oily skin.

Do you see any professional skin care specialist?

Yes. I go whenever I have a problem. I have really sensitive skin so I'm prone to getting allergies. Also I've discovered the diamond peel. After a couple of sessions, your skin is noticeably clearer and brighter!

What is your favorite skin care product?

SkinCeutical's Skin Firming Cream. It leaves my skin really smooth and gives it a nice glow.

Who does your hair?

I go to different parlors depending on the service I need. I go to Tinnets Salon for hair treatments and haircuts. For hair coloring, I go to Kaizen. To have my hair blow-dried, I go to Regine's salon.

How do you take care of your hair?

I am a Kérastase user. I am currently using the Chroma Reflect line. I try not to shampoo my hair every day because my hair gets really dry. Hot oils are also very important. I try to do it a couple of times a month. And I also use the leave-on conditioner of Kérastase for extra moisture.

How do you wear your hair?

When I'm lazy I put my hair up in a messy bun or ponytail. But If I'm going somewhere, I'll have it blow-dried either straight or wavy. I like my hair to always look neat.

What is your makeup style?

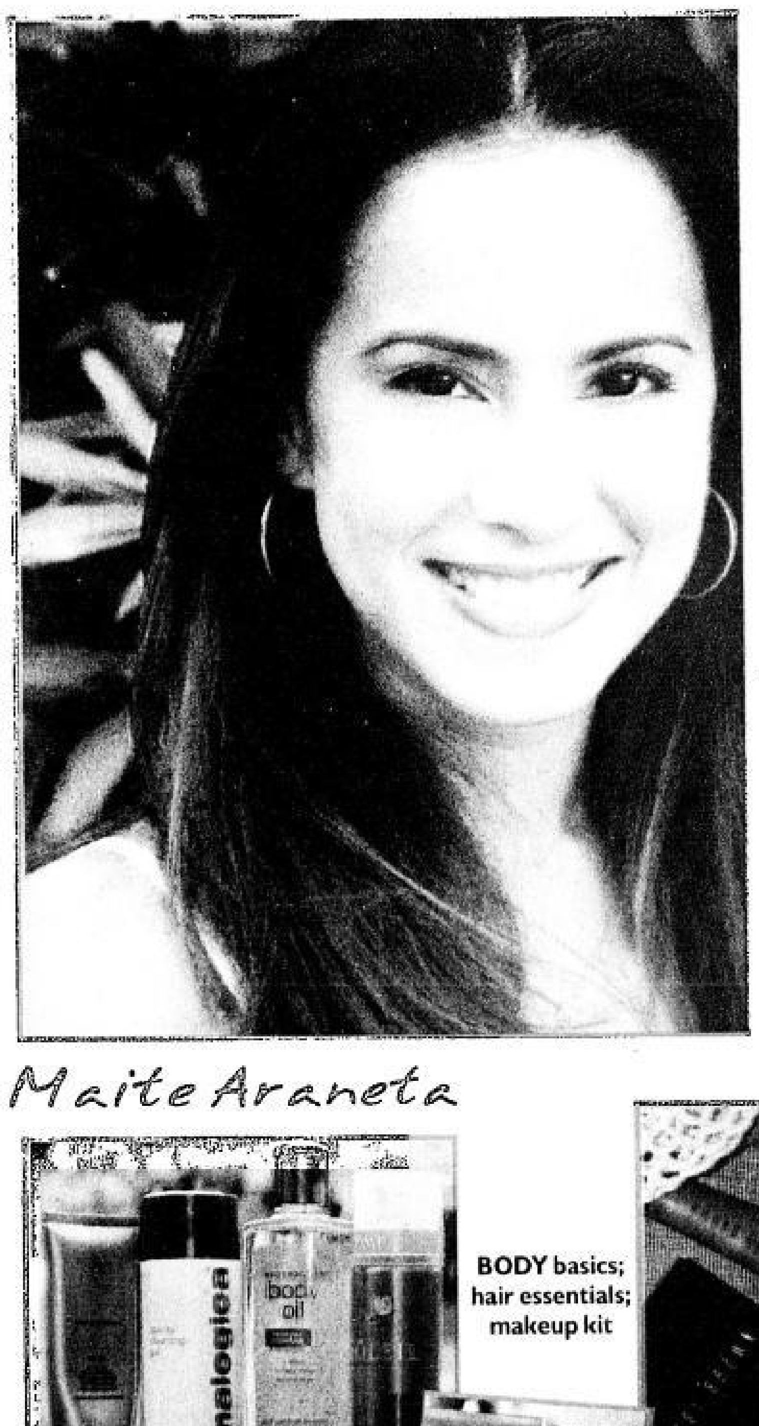
I hardly wear makeup. I'm not very good at applying makeup, so for those times when I need to wear it I cheat by using products with minimal coverage. You can't really make a mistake with the application and it looks very natural.

What's in your makeup bag?

Laura Mercier Tinted Moisturizer, Tarte Cheek Tint, Neutrogena Clean Lash Tint, Clinique Black Honey Lip Tint, Nars Dolce Vita Sheer Lipstick, Bobbi Brown Simmer Brick Compact Eye Shadow.

What beauty items can't you live without?

Clean And Clear Oil Control Blotters! And any lip gloss. I love them!

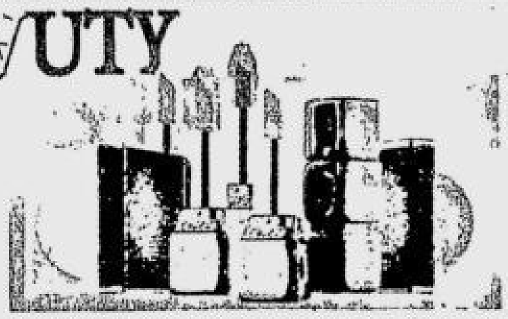


Maite Araneta

BODY basics; hair essentials; makeup kit

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARTA ARANETA
HAIR RAYMOND SANTIAGO FOR L'OREAL TECNI.ART
MAKEUP BARBI CHAN OF MAYBELLINE NY

New Christmas cosmetics so far



GUERLAIN KissKiss Precious Colors lipstick in Charme d' Ambre 508, Rouge Elixir 509, Magie de Garnet and Philtre d' Or 507

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

AS A CHILD, I WOULD gather all my favorite pretty Christmas presents and carry them with me wherever I went.

Now that I'm older, the toys have been replaced by beauty products. Cosmetic companies give out their Christmas gifts early and I already have favorites I lug around in my huge trademark handbags. More will come pouring in, but I have already taken my pick from these early birds.

Clarins Forever Diamonds collection—My favorite romantic movies have always been those with the transformation scenes. Nerdy girl in a bun and eyeglasses gets a makeover. She removes the glasses and with one tug of a hair chopstick, her long lustrous waves tumble on her shoulders, revealing looks worthy of a cover girl.

That's the appeal of the eye pencil that comes with this elegant rhinestone-studded clip. Those days of rummaging through your bag for your eye pencil are over! It's not plain black, but it has silver glitter incorporated in it so with a simple swipe around the eyes, you instantly have an eye-catching look for the evening. It can also be used as a scarf holder or brooch.

A Guerlain Christmas, Poudre C'est Moi (P4,098)—A true work of art. The garnet and gold box pays homage to flamboyant French King Louis IV and has the effect of a stained-glass window.

The translucent shade is enhanced by fragments of white sapphire to give one's complexion a striking sheen. Whenever I take it out of my bag in public, women around me gasp. They continue to stare as I pull out the half-moon pony hair brush and glide it across my T-zone and cheeks to blot oily areas giving a fresh glow.

Downside: a bit bulky.

KissKiss Precious Colours Silky and Delicious (P1, 550)—If you look closely at the picture, the lipstick is faceted like a jewel and all four colors contain rich silky pigment with very fine shimmer. It retained the cubed lipstick packaging but instead of the elegant gold, it's a deep metallic garnet for more drama.

My shades of choice: Magie de Garnet—a deep jewel red that contains both cool and warm tones so it's the closest to a neutral red that will suit most people. Charme d' Ambre—nude caramel brown is my predicted bestseller. The other two are Philtre d' Or—a fusion of salmon and gold which is the perfect match for smoky eyes, and Rouge Elixir—a classic red with silvery shimmer giving lips a fuller look, the kind of red most light-skinned women would love.

Smooth Christmas skin

Give your favorite girls smooth skin to flaunt this Christmas.

I know a lot of women saving up for laser hair removal and looking forward to a hairless hassle-free life. Then came the 12-percent VAT law and the dream just frittered away.

Underarm laser that was originally P5,000 per session ended up being P5,600 and for six to eight sessions, that extra P600 adds up to an extra P3,600-P4,800.

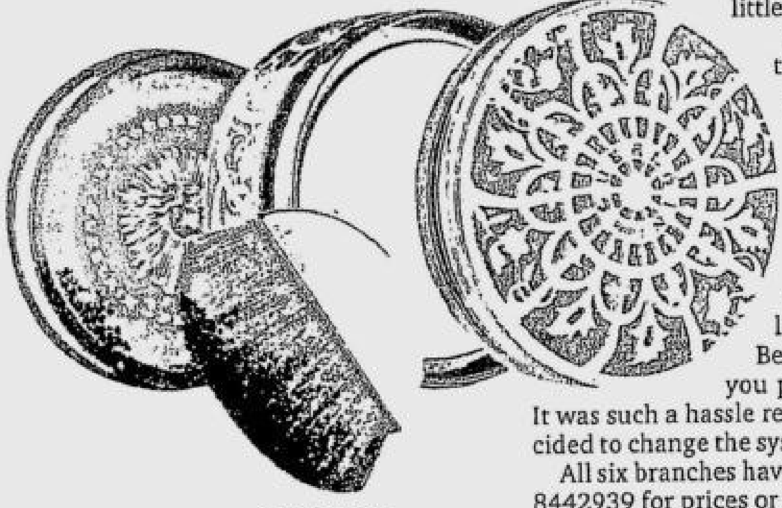
The Belo Medical group, which has literally zapped thousands including the hottest movie stars with no casualties, now offers you a way to sort of cancel the Value Added Tax.

For an indefinite period you get 10-percent discount per session for whatever area you prefer to zap. If you bring a friend, you both get 15-percent discount each. The latter totally eliminates VAT plus a little extra.

In the past, in order to avail of the promo price, one has to pay for the full eight-session promo amount before starting.

Since some lucky women achieve total hairlessness in as little as four sessions, Belo will only charge you per session this time. It was such a hassle refunding that Belo decided to change the system.

All six branches have laser machines. Call 8442939 for prices or visit the branch nearest you. Visit www.belomed. com or e-mail Belo at info@belomed.com.

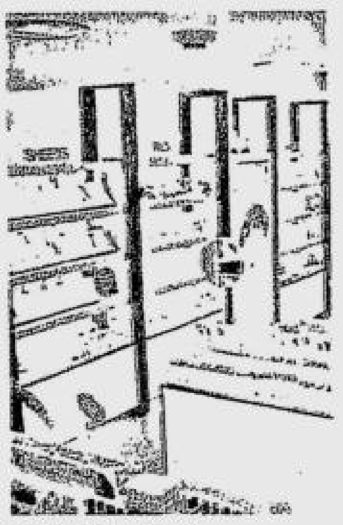


GUERLAIN
Poudre Ces Moi

BEAUTY BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!

By Gem Padilla
Contributor



THE FACESHOP

GET A CHANCE TO meet and greet in person Korea's No. 1 heartthrob and Thefaceshop's brand ambassador Kwong Sang Woo, popularly known to Filipinos as Cholo, his character in the hit Koreanovela "Stairway To Heaven." The event is on Dec. 18, 6 p.m., at the Glorietta Activity Center. Premium and regular passes are available at Thefaceshop store. Promo runs until the day of the show.

FACE masks

fresh fruit acerola
fresh fruit lemon
THEFACESHOP
Tea Tree & Bergamot
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PHOTOS BY RAMON LINDO

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MARIA ALMIRA CRUZ
MERCEDITA CASTILLO
PETER KIMPO
ANGELA LAO
DELIA P. BUCTUAN
ARACELI GAZO
ARLENE GO
JEANE ALAY

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ESPIE VINARAO
MA. THERESA S.J. ONG
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JULITA SANTOS
EVELYN TAGUDIN
MA. CHRISTINA CASTILLO
JEOFREY ABALOS
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CLAIRE BUCTUAN
JESUS BUGABAN
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GERALDIN CABANTING
AMABLE B CRUZ
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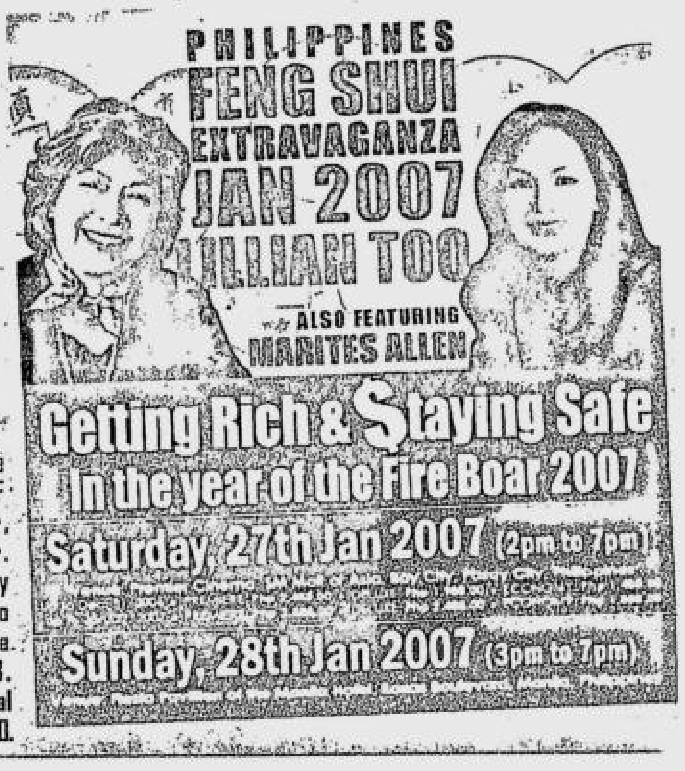
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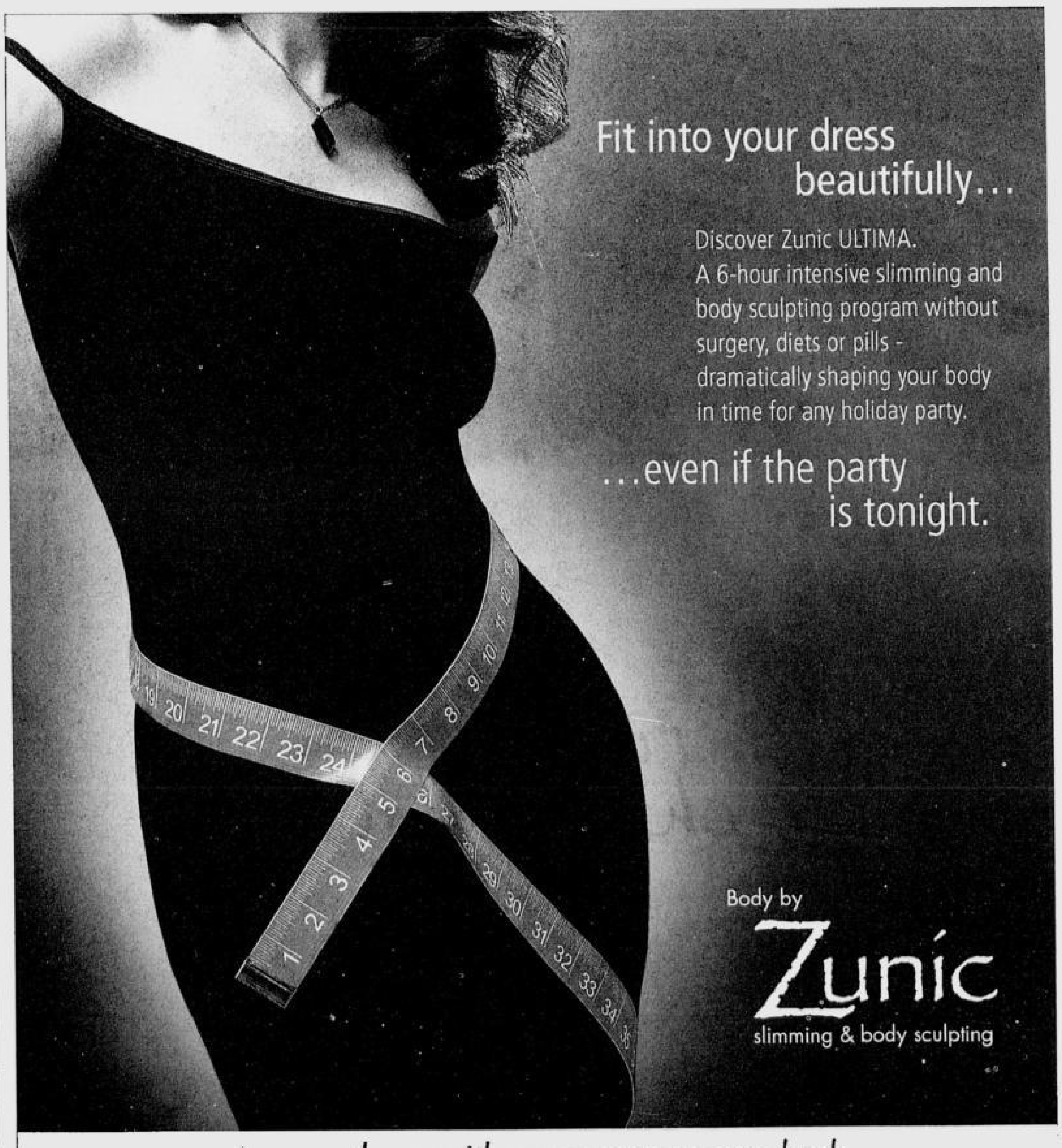
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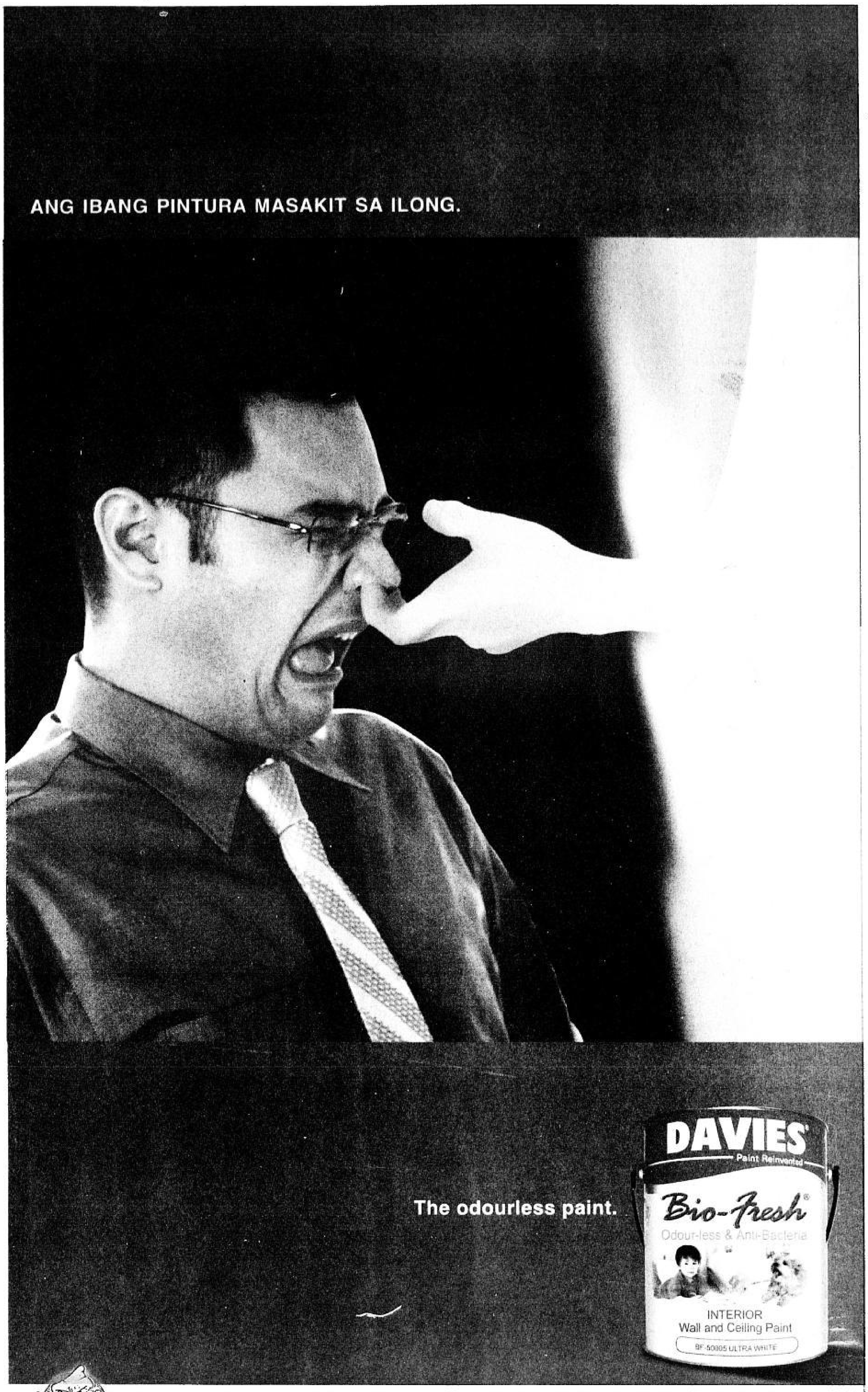
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cut & keep

LAURA Mercier makeup available at Rustan's Essenses

Easy does it

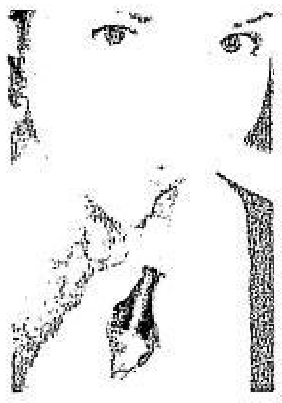
By Angel Jacob, *Contributor*

SIMPLE AND EASY MAKEUP STEPS TO look clean and fresh in minutes.

STEP 1. For my under eye, using my bare hands, I gently dab Laura Mercier's Secret Camouflage to cover dark circles, followed by Laura Mercier's Secret Brightener which I also apply to the same area. Then I complete the process by setting them with Laura Mercier Translucent powder, for a softer, more natural look.

STEP 2. I always make sure to fix my eyebrows and curl my lashes, and put a little mascara if I have a dinner or event to go to. Then I sweep blush on the apples of my cheeks.

STEP 3. My simple everyday look isn't complete without a touch of fresh color to my lips. Laura Mercier Bare lip shade makes my skin look healthier.



STEP 4. A sweep of Laura Mercier Secret Brightening Powder just around the eye area finishes my natural everyday look!

This Christmas, choose color.
CARONIA
nail polish
CARONIA
nail polish
CARONIA
nail polish

FASHION

Contributing editors
Jenni Epperson
and Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

What's hot!

CHAIKEN
LIFE
YL
PRADA
CHLOE
CHANEL
PRADA
GIVENCHY
BOTTEGA VENETA
HUSSEIN CHALAYAN
CAROLINA HERRERA
ELIE SAAB
MALANDRINO

Spring-Summer trends

NEIL BARRETT
DSQUARED
ALEXANDER MCQUEEN
ANN DEMEULEMEESTER
ALLESANDRO DELL'AQUA
COSTUME NATIONAL
DSQUARED
MARC JACOBS
CALVIN KLEIN

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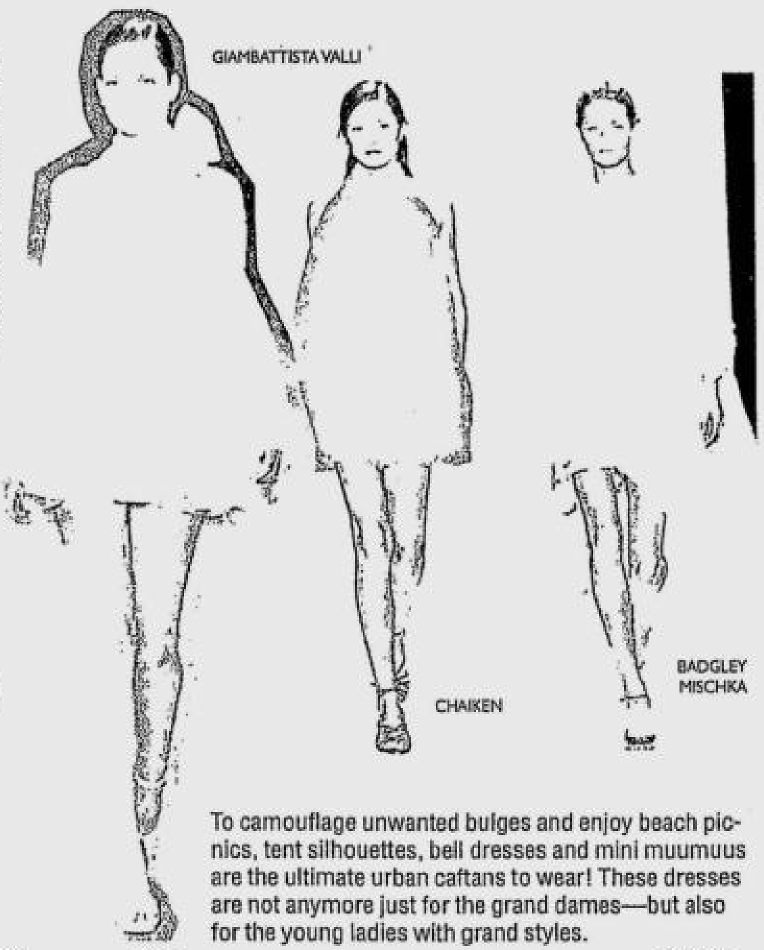
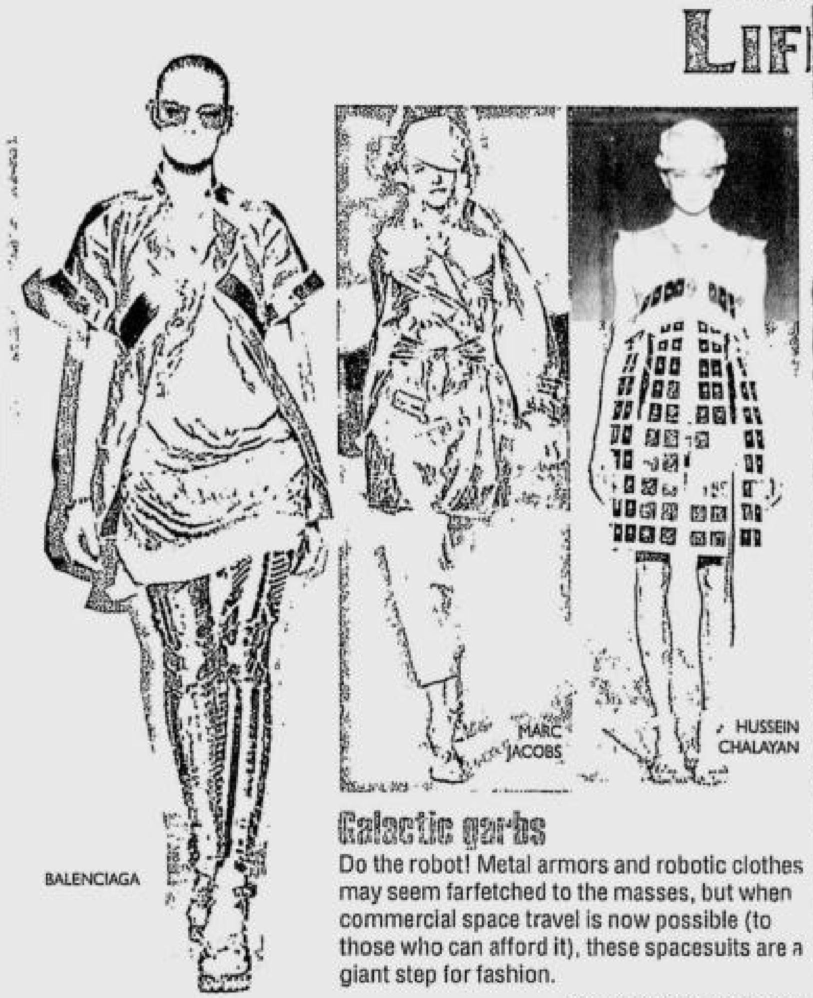
CAROLINA
HERRERA
JOHN
GALLIANO
CHANEL

Black and white
Classics are cool. Mix and match black-and-white pieces, the perfect canvas for summer's colorful accessories!


GIAMBATTISTA VALLI
CHAIKEN
BADGLEY
MISCHKA

To camouflage unwanted bulges and enjoy beach picnics, tent silhouettes, bell dresses and mini muumuus are the ultimate urban caftans to wear! These dresses are not anymore just for the grand dames—but also for the young ladies with grand styles.


BALENCIAGA
MARC
JACOBS
HUSSEIN
CHALAYAN

Galactic garbs
Do the robot! Metal armors and robotic clothes may seem farfetched to the masses, but when commercial space travel is now possible (to those who can afford it), these spacesuits are a giant step for fashion.

PHOTOS FROM WWW.STYLE.COM

The future of fashion

THE NEW YORK FASHION WEEK'S SPRING-Summer fashion shows reminded of that scene from the movie "Somewhere In Time" where Christopher Reeves sees the ubiquitous coin he has pulled out of his pocket, which sucks him back to the present and away from his love.

Mabuhay!

Jenni Epperson

Unlike Reeves, you don't need a coin to figure out next year's spring-summer collections. The fashion houses' new guards such as Riccardo Tisci for Givenchy, Christopher Bailey for Burberry Prorsum, Frida Giannini for Gucci and Mathew Williamson for Emilio Pucci sent a strong message down the runway that old's cool! They took inspirations from their fashion houses' archived anthology and made their designs party girl-worthy!

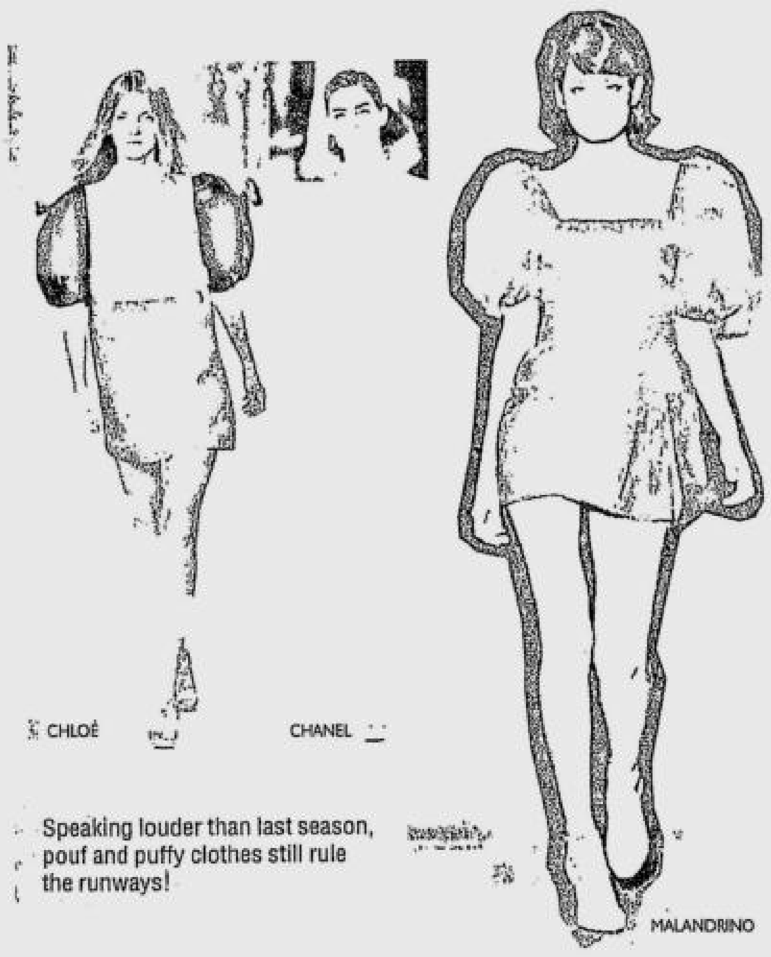
Exception are some designers like Nicholas Ghesquiere for Balenciaga, Marc Jacobs, Miuccia Prada and Hussein Chalayan, who took the fashion road less traveled.

These visionaries designed clothes for the modern woman and possibly for the ladies who would soon be flying sub-orbitally in Richard Branson's Virgin Galactica Spaceship in 2009.

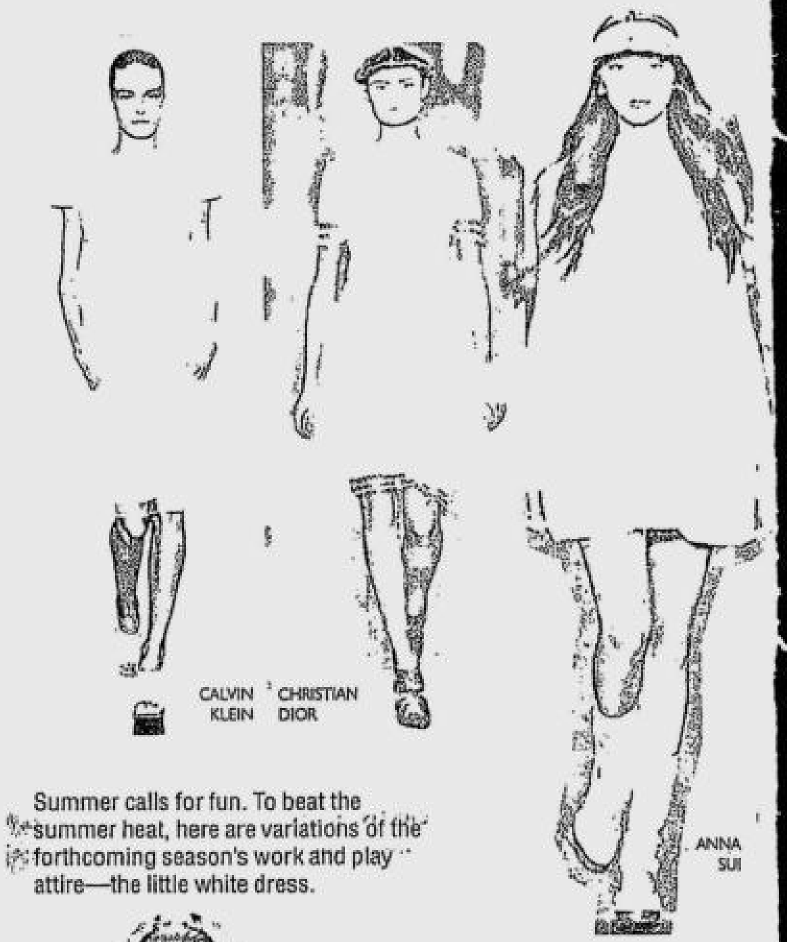
While some are eager to stock on summer's must-haves as early as now and are revving up their credit limits, some of us have to dig deep in our closet archives and use our creative juices to put together a collection Obi-Wan Kenobi will be proud of.

Once again, the fashion pendulum swings back in time, and as expected, it will swing forward to... space!

E-mail jfashion@inquirer.com.ph


CHLOÉ
CHANEL
MALANDRINO

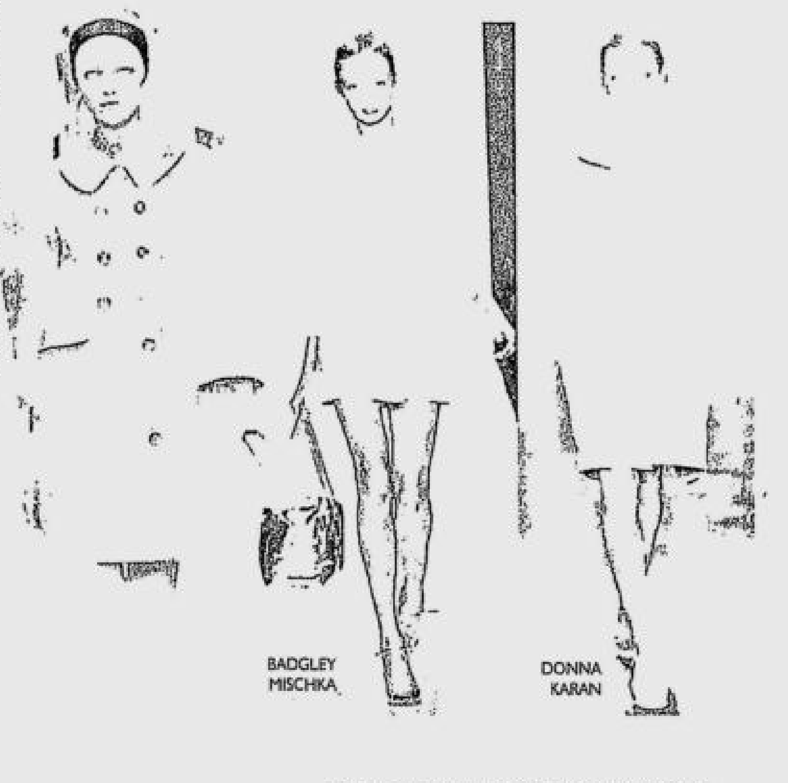
Speaking louder than last season, pouf and puffy clothes still rule the runways!


CALVIN
KLEIN
CHRISTIAN
DIOR
ANNA
SUI

Summer calls for fun. To beat the summer heat, here are variations of the forthcoming season's work and play attire—the little white dress.

HERMES
ROBERTO CAVALLI
DSQUARED

Wide-leg pants
Floor-sweeping pants make a comeback! Tailored trousers fit for the modern working woman.


BADGLEY
MISCHKA
DONNA
KARAN
BURBERRY
PRORSUM

It's the season's shift dress. Instead of heavy wool or cashmere, summer's coat dress is made of silk, cotton and even trendy nylon.

VIKTOR &
ROLF
GIVENCHY
EMILIO PUCCI

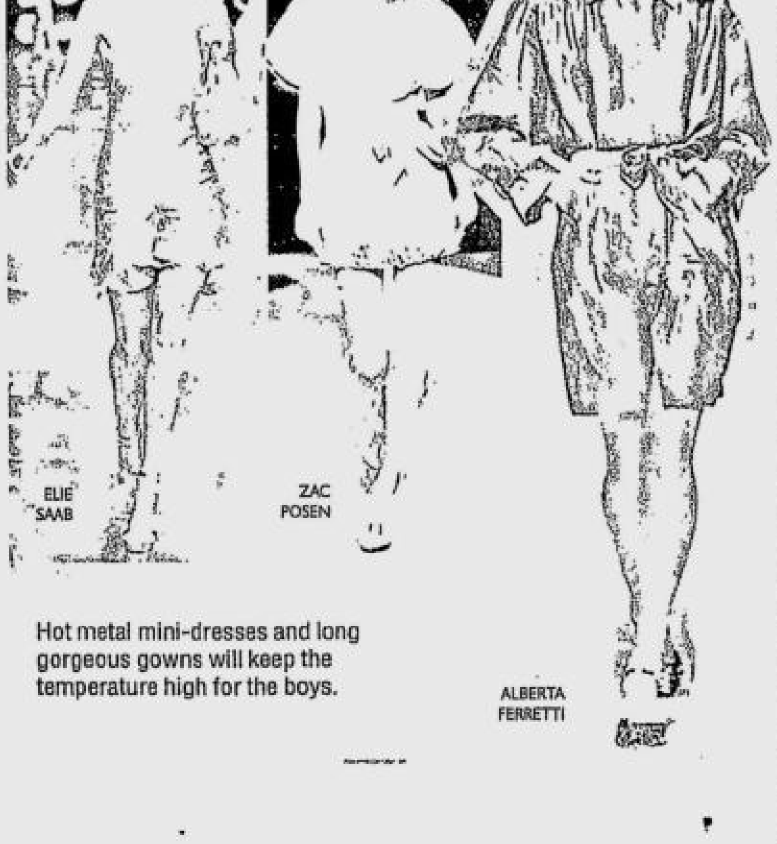
Graphic cutouts
Play jigsaw puzzle and adorn your clothes with graphic details that will put granny appliqués to shame.

BALENCIAGA
KARL
LAGERFELD
KARL
LAGERFELD

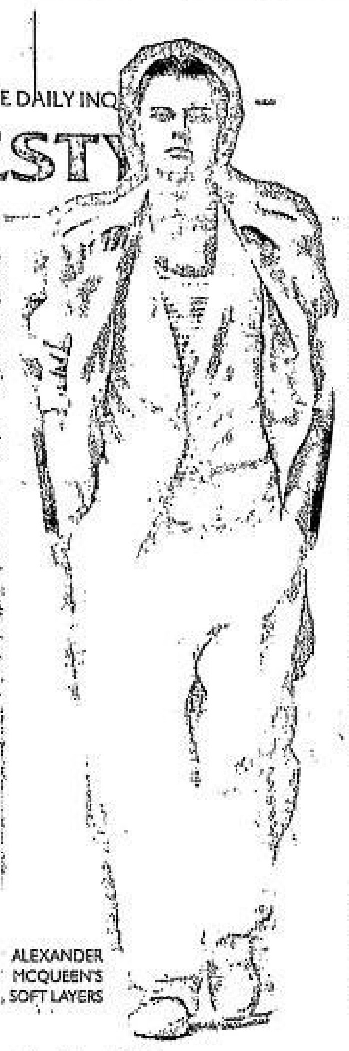
Tight threads, black, and a whole lot of attitude spell rock! But this time, ditch the torn T-shirts and rough rags for sleek black pants and skinny blazers, and don a bejeweled rock-icon tee. Polished style performance is key.

LANVIN
GIAMBATTISTA
VALLI
PROENZA
SCHOULER

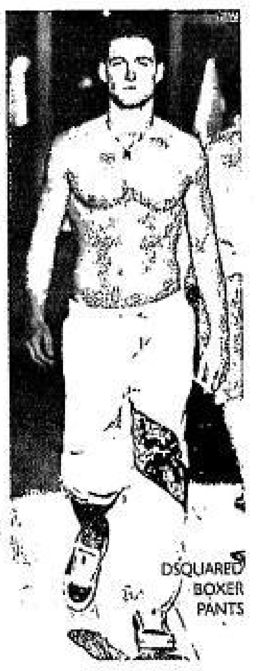
Rainbow bright
Think R.O.Y.G.V.I.B (red, orange, yellow, green, violet, indigo, blue)! Summer is the perfect time to splash colors in your wardrobe.


ELIE
SAAB
ZAC
POSEN
ALBERTA
FERRETTI

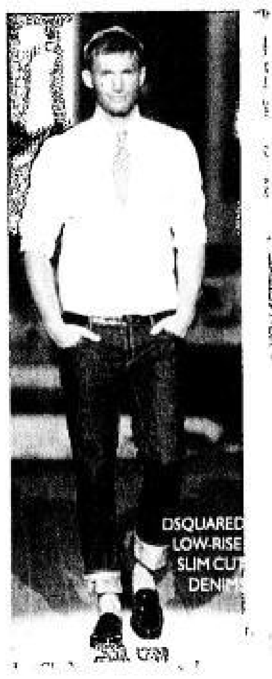
Hot metal mini-dresses and long gorgeous gowns will keep the temperature high for the boys.



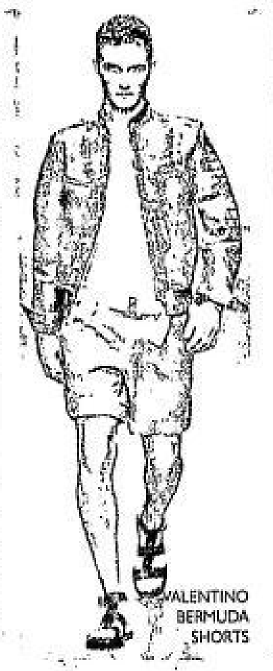
ALEXANDER MCQUEEN'S SOFT LAYERS



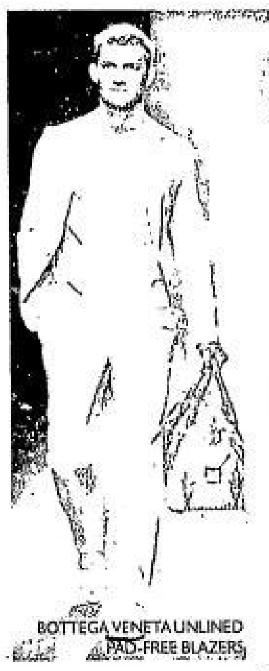
DSQUARED BOXER PANTS



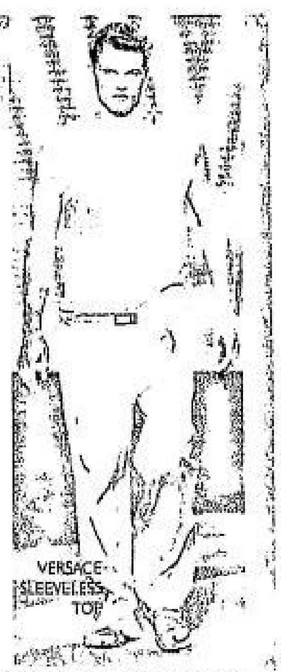
DSQUARED LOW-RISE SLIM CUT DENIM



VALENTINO BERMUDA SHORTS



BOTTEGA VENETA UNLINED PAD-FREE BLAZERS



VERSACE SLEEVELESS TOP

PHOTOS FROM WWW.STYLE.COM

[illegible]

Here's a partial list of trends to watch out (and swipe your credit cards) for as you plan to beef up existing pieces for summer 2007

By Alex Y. Vergara

AS IF YOUR HOLIDAY SCHEDULE isn't hectic enough—what with all that shopping, feasting and gift-giving—December is usually the time fashionistas (and that includes stylish men) take stock of their respective wardrobes as they brace themselves for sultry months ahead.

Unlike in temperate countries, where spring and summer are welcomed with open arms like long-lost relatives after a bleak, nearly endless winter, we in the Philippines simply dread the hot, dry months as they dampen not only our bodies, but also our sense of style.

For fashion-forward Filipinos, the best months to dress up are from December to February, when the mild weather is conducive to layering and to festive as well as dark-colored numbers.

But summer (never mind a nonexistent spring) need not hinder you at your attempts at self-expression.

Based on forthcoming spring-summer looks in the West, local fashion designers Randy Ortiz, Anthony Nocom and Joey Samson offer us a list of weather-friendly (and appropriate!) looks that can pass muster even among the most hardened naysayers.

Unless you own a closet-full of fur coats and fleece-lined jackets, these items are bound to go well with stuff you already have or plan to buy in the near future.

Fabrics of choice, as far as Ortiz is concerned, are cotton, knits, seersuckers, washed denims, cotton twills, cotton pique and light cord jersey. Colors range from subtle earth tones to bright electric hues, such as deep teal, turquoise, chartreuse and lemon yellow.

Although this look may be a bit tricky to pull off (amateurs need not risk it), he also encourages his clients to combine prints with prints. This technique includes such pairings as stripes with florals and paisleys with baroque patterns.

"It also pays to invest in attractive neckties, washed-out leather belts with big buckles, printed cummerbunds, driving shoes and leather slip-ons," says Ortiz.

Nocom predicts the preppy look will make a comeback in 2007 via knitted polo shirts in wide stripes or solids in refreshing pastels. They go well, he says, with a pair of chinos, jeans or slim Bermuda shorts.

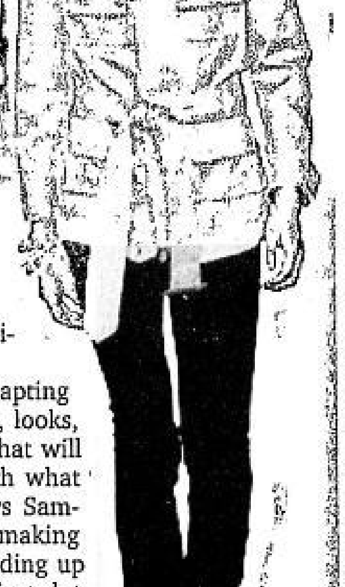
"Pleated pants have been out for several seasons now," he says, "but they're likely to resurface halfway into next year."

Guys, here's a partial list of trends to watch out (and swipe your credit cards) for as you plan to beef up existing pieces for our very own version of "spring-summer" 2007.

- washed denim bomber jackets
- light sweaters with emblems and zip-up blousons
- waisted or crop jackets, preferably in denim
- unlined, pads-free blazers in soft canvas, twill or denim slim jackets with patch-pocket details
- updated safari or cargo jackets with sleeves and pocket details similar to a photographer's vest and in more offbeat colors
- bermuda shorts (as opposed to the low-rise, wide-legged hip hop variety) in cotton or textured brocade
- short pants and sleeveless tops (not necessarily as a set), with shorts ranging from swimwear type to calf-length
- sporty boxer pants
- low-rise, slim-cut and partially washed denim jeans
- vests in different fabrics to contrast with suits
- soft layering in similar shades

"Again, the key to adapting trends is to pick colors, looks, items and accessories that will and can work best with what you already have," says Samson. "That way you're making an investment and building up your wardrobe and not just cluttering it with season finds."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph.



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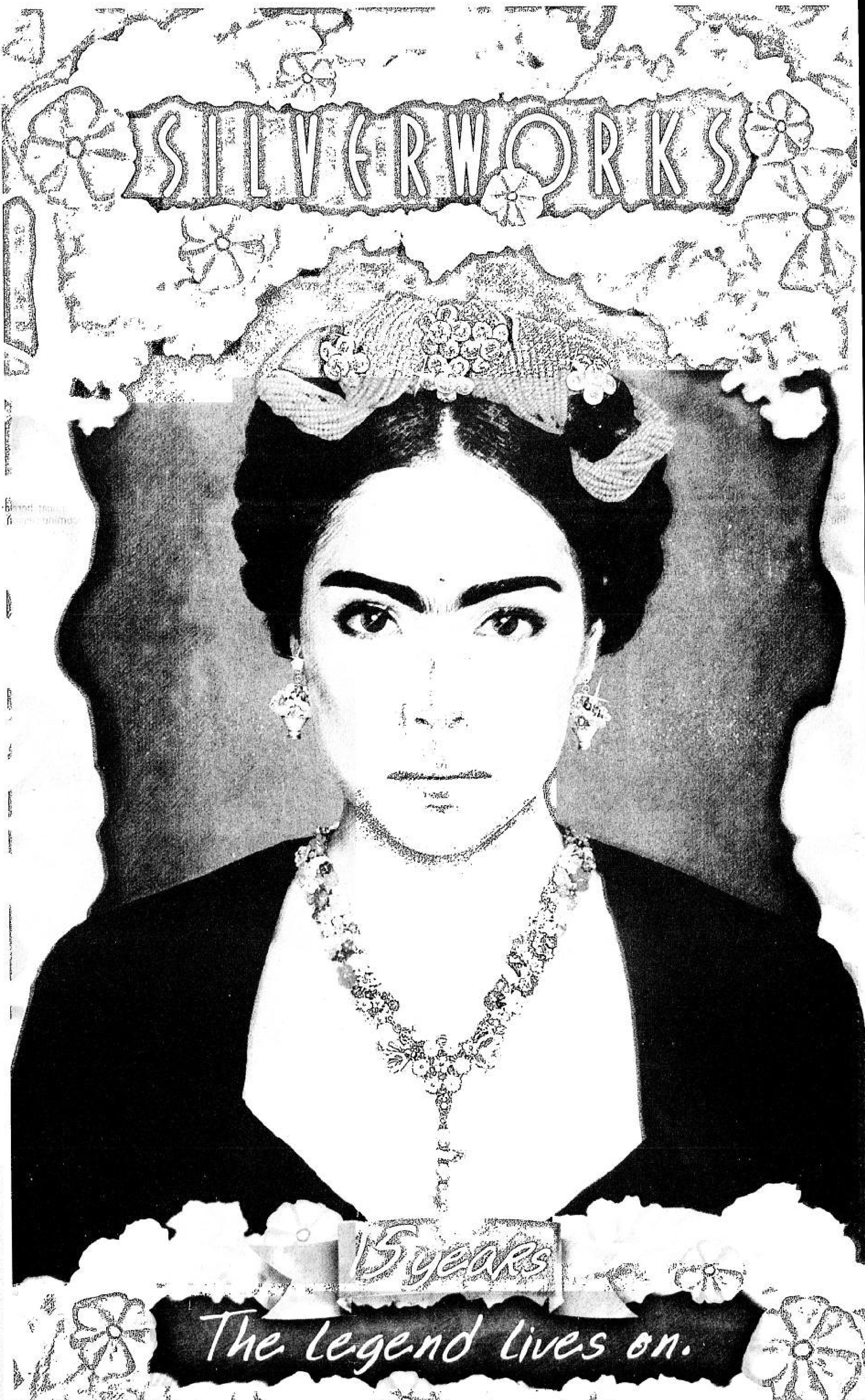
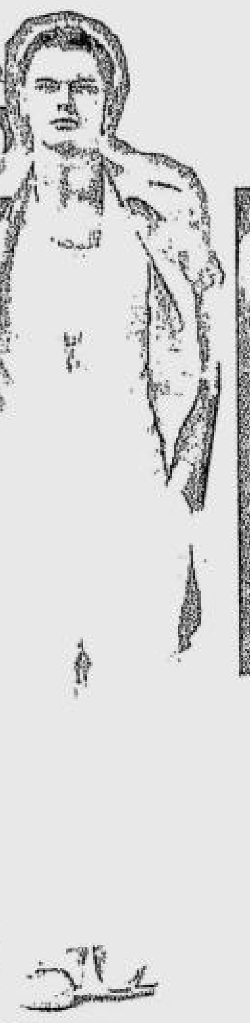
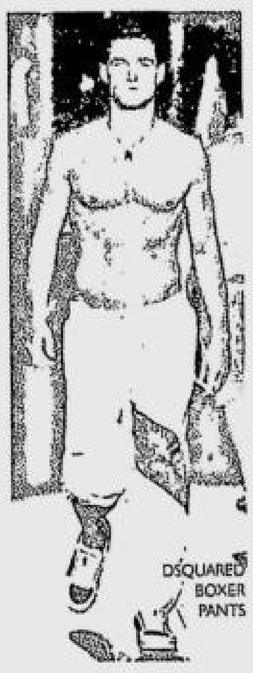




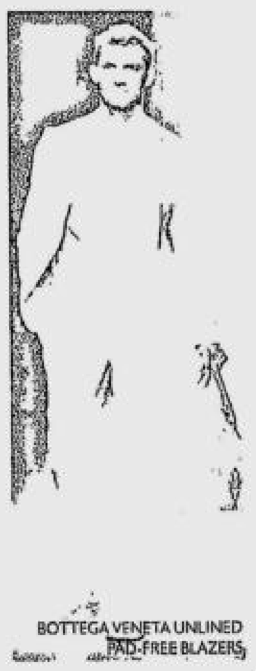
ALEXANDER MCQUEEN'S SOFT LAYERS



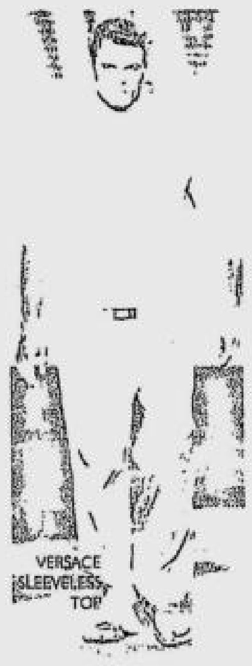
DSQUARED BOXER PANTS

DSQUARED LOW-RISE SLIM-CUT DENIM

VALENTINO BERMUDA SHORTS



BOTTEGA VENETA UNLINED PAD-FREE BLAZERS



VERSACE SLEEVELESS TOP

PHOTOS FROM WWW.STYLE.COM

Here's a partial list of trends to watch out (and swipe your credit cards) for as you plan to beef up existing pieces for summer 2007

By Alex Y. Vergara

AS IF YOUR HOLIDAY SCHEDULE isn't hectic enough—what with all that shopping, feasting and gift-giving—December is usually the time fashionistas (and that includes stylish men) take stock of their respective wardrobes as they brace themselves for sultry months ahead.

Unlike in temperate countries, where spring and summer are welcomed with open arms like long-lost relatives after a bleak, nearly endless winter, we in the Philippines simply dread the hot, dry months as they dampen not only our bodies, but also our sense of style.

For fashion-forward Filipinos, the best months to dress up are from December to February, when the mild weather is conducive to layering and to festive as well as dark-colored numbers.

But summer (never mind a nonexistent spring) need not hinder you at your attempts at self-expression.

Based on forthcoming spring-summer looks in the West, local fashion designers Randy Ortiz, Anthony Nocom and Joey Samson offer us a list of weather-friendly (and appropriate!) looks that can pass muster even among the most hardened naysayers.

Unless you own a closet-full of fur coats and fleece-lined jackets, these items are bound to go well with stuff you already have or plan to buy in the near future.

Fabrics of choice, as far as Ortiz is concerned, are cotton, knits, seersuckers, washed denims, cotton twills, cotton pique and light cord jersey. Colors range from subtle earth tones to bright electric hues such as deep teal, turquoise, chartreuse and lemon yellow.

Although this look may be a bit tricky to pull off (amateurs need not risk it), he also encourages his clients to combine prints with prints. This technique includes such pairings as stripes with florals and paisleys with baroque patterns.

"It also pays to invest in attractive neckties, washed-out leather belts with big buckles, printed cummerbunds, driving shoes and leather slip-ons," says Ortiz.

Nocom predicts the preppy look will make a comeback in 2007 via knitted polo shirts in wide stripes or solids in refreshing pastels. They go well, he says, with a pair of chinos, jeans or slim Bermuda shorts.

"Pleated pants have been out for several seasons now," he says, "but they're likely to resurface halfway into next year."

Guys, here's a partial list of trends to watch out (and swipe your credit cards) for as you plan to beef up existing pieces for our very own version of "spring-summer" 2007.

- washed denim bomber jackets
- light sweaters with emblems and zip-up blousons
- waisted or crop jackets, preferably in denim
- unlined, pads-free blazers in soft canvas, twill or denim slim jackets with patch-pocket details
- updated safari or cargo jackets with sleeves and pocket details similar to a photographer's vest and in more offbeat colors
- bermuda shorts (as opposed to the low-rise, wide-legged hip hop variety) in cotton or textured brocade
- short pants and sleeveless tops (not necessarily as a set), with shorts ranging from swimwear type to calf-length
- sporty boxer pants
- low-rise, slim-cut and partially washed denim jeans
- vests in different fabrics to contrast with suits
- soft layering in similar shades

"Again, the key to adapting trends is to pick colors, looks, items and accessories that will and can work best with what you already have," says Samson. "That way you're making an investment and building up your wardrobe and not just cluttering it with season finds."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph.

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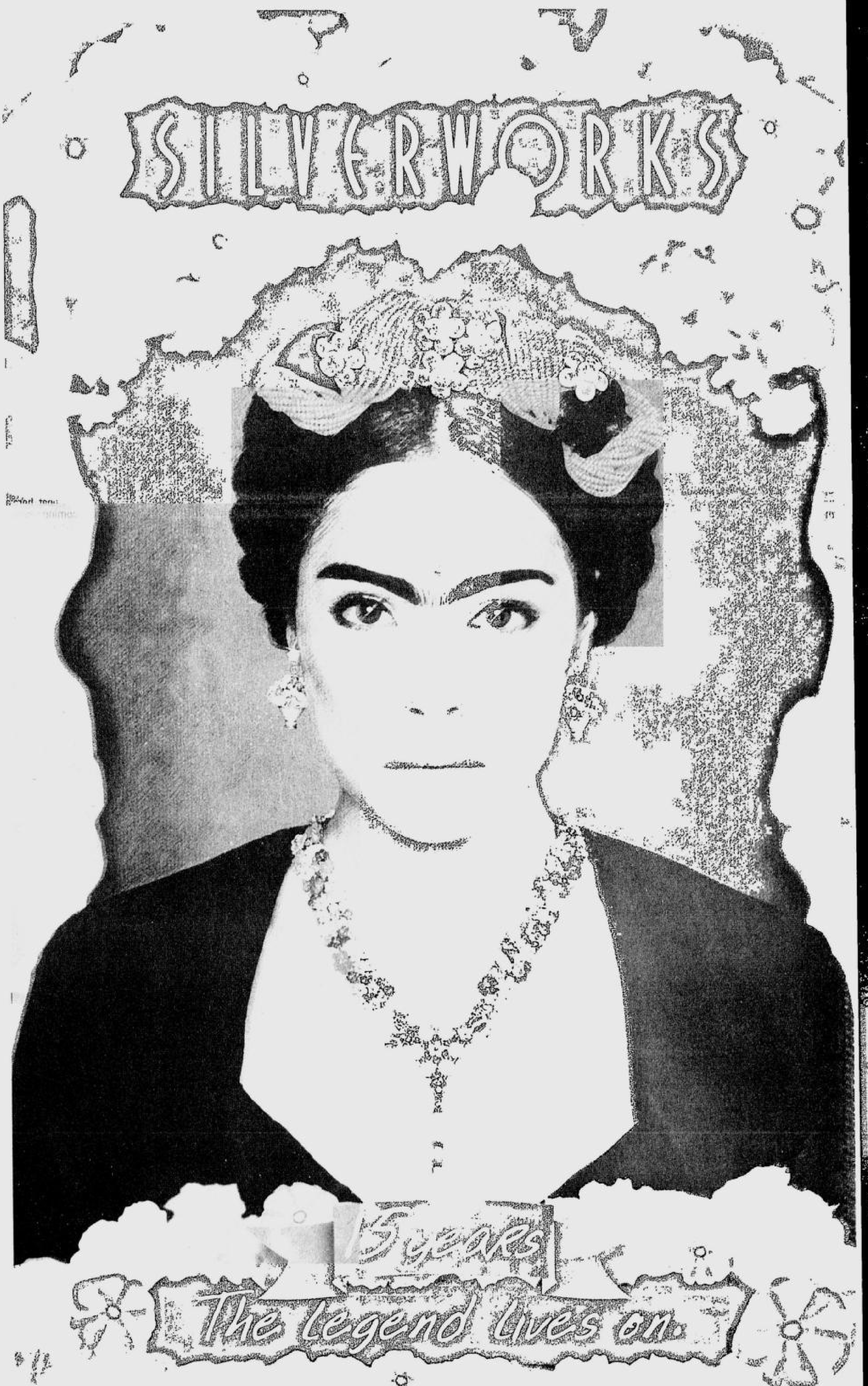


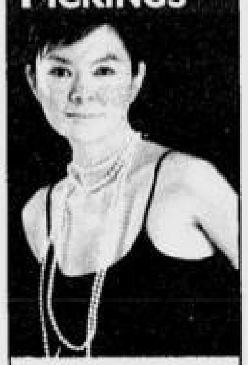
SILVERWORKS
15 years
The legend lives on

Necessary objects

Make sure you keep good-quality vintage pieces to cope with fashion cycles

EVER-CHANGING FASHION IS EVOLVING ONCE again. This time around, Fall/Winter '06 trends are shifting into Spring/Summer '07's latest must-haves. It's almost impossible to keep up with all these sartorial changes ... Well, almost but not quite!

APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Although most of us simply can't indulge in major wardrobe overhauls each season, this doesn't mean we can't be as stylish and fashionable as we want to be. One way to keep abreast of the latest trends without breaking the bank is by choosing a few defining pieces that you can add to your already existing, basic wardrobe.

Do keep in mind that fashion is cyclical. What was hot in the '80s, '60s or some other fashion decade can and will come back at some point in your life. So, make sure you keep good quality pieces, which you can use again. In case you've managed to store some items from seasons past, simply open your fashion cupboard to choose what pieces you can resurrect by next season.

Then again, Manila is now replete with retail stores that offer the latest fashions at purse-friendly prices. Plus, you always have the option of scouring *ukay-ukay* and second-hand stores that offer affordable but still up-to-the-minute vintage finds.

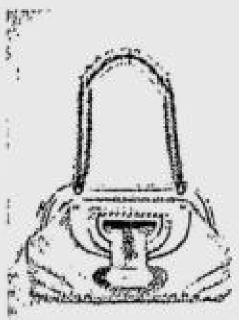
As always, accessories are the easiest, most practical way to update one's wardrobe. For your consideration, we've compiled the top accessories trends for Spring/Summer 2007. Now all you have to do is choose what suits your personal style best.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

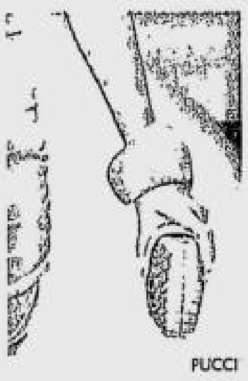
BOTTEGA VENETA

BRIAN ATWOOD

CHRISTIAN DIOR


CHRISTIAN DIOR

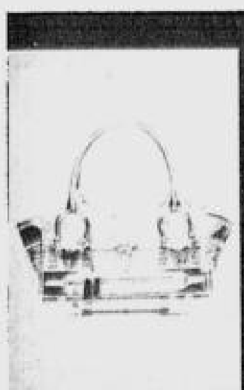
MIU MIU


PUCCI

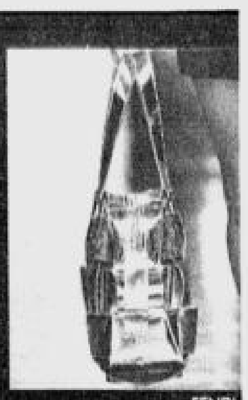
VALENTINO

Pastel-perfect

Soft hues like blush, powder blue or mint green are de rigueur for the coming season. If you're not into color, subtle touches in the form of purses, shoes or accessories like bangles and necklaces (not worn together, please) are your best options.


BURBERRY

PUCCI


FENDI

GUCCI

TOD'S

MIU MIU

PUCCI

Space Age silvers

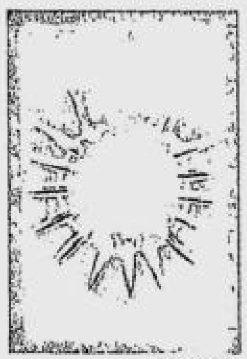
Metallic pieces have been in fashion for several seasons now, but silver seems to be dominating the runways for Spring/Summer. Get on with the trend by toting a silver bag with a modern feel or by donning space-age platforms.

BALENCIAGA

BALENCIAGA

LANVIN

HERMES


TOM BINNS

LANVIN

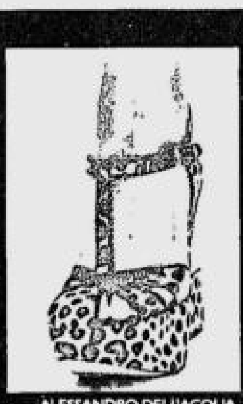
STELLA MCCARTNEY

Hard-edged hardware

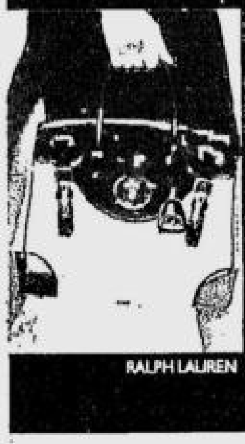
A Mad Max moment is currently invading fashion's runways as design houses like Balenciaga, Lanvin and even timeless Hermes presented hard-edged accessories that are chunky, funky and fun!

PHOTOS FROM WWW.STYLE.COM

MARNI


ALESSANDRO DELL'ACQUA

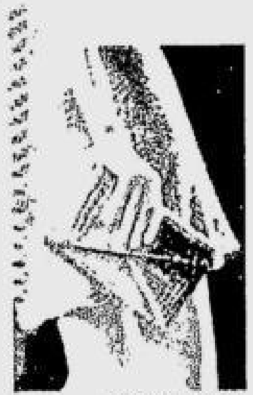
GIAMBATTISTA VALLI


RALPH LAUREN

ALEXANDRA NEEL

Black & white

Although black and white are veritable classics, the graphic combination is stronger than ever. Choose a dressy leather purse for work or go casual with a canvas and leather tote. For an even more striking look, match it with bright colors like red or solid hues such as black, white or beige.


BOTTEGA VENETA

ALESSANDRO DELL'ACQUA

BOTTEGA VENETA

BOTTEGA VENETA

JOHN GALLIANO

Exotic skins

Bags and shoes in materials like snakeskin, stingray, ostrich, crocodile and the like are the ultimate in luxury and this time around, they come in washed-out Spring/Summer hues like pale pink or dove grey. Animal rights activists or those on a budget can also indulge, as there are always the stamped leather or synthetic varieties to consider.

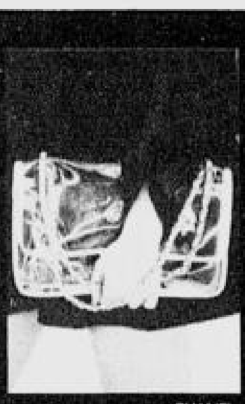
PRADA

PRADA

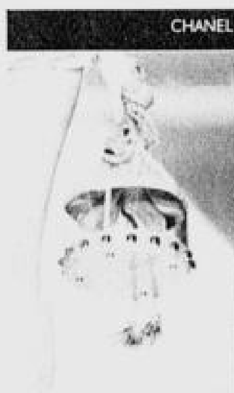
Turban

Muccia says the turban is back in fashion, so you can expect her faithful followers to don the potentially tricky headgear come next season. Just a little caveat: When wearing a turban, it's best to keep clothes streamlined and accessories to a minimum, lest you want to look like some Gypsy fortuneteller.

CHANEL


CHANEL

PUCCI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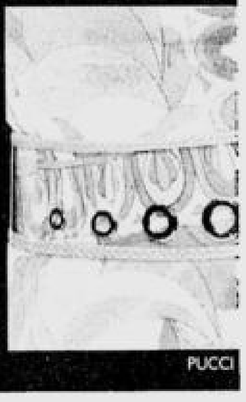
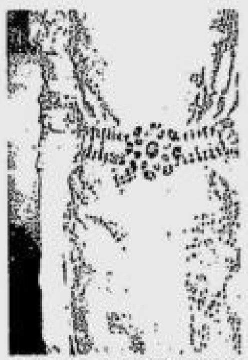
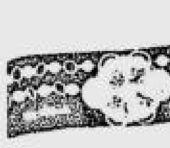
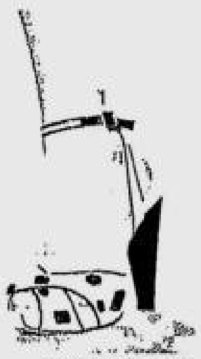

PUCCI

Clear and lucite

Everything's lightening up for next season, so it's time to invest in pieces with transparent details and Lucite heels. See-through plastic sandals or transparent totes are sexy, fun and definite must-haves.


ROBERTO CAVALLI


CHLOE


GIAMBATTISTA VALLI

ROBERTO CAVALLI

LOUIS VUITTON

Embellishments

Minimalists might balk at the thought but embellished accessories are ultra-fashionable this coming season. Bejeweled, bijou-ed or even grommet-studded bags, belts and shoes are all the rage and the perfect foil for Spring/Summer's softer silhouettes.

PROENZA SCHOULER

BOTTEGA VENETA

CHLOE

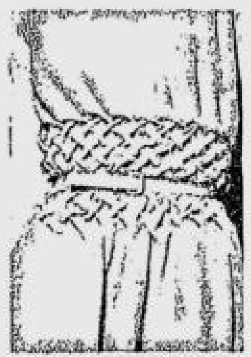
CALVIN KLEIN

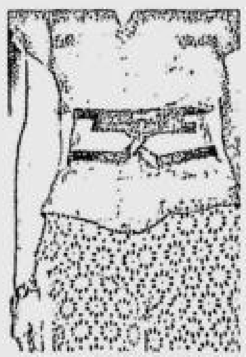
MARNI

Wooden accents

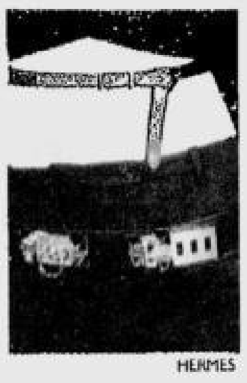
Wooden accents in the form of chunky heels and studded embellishments are back for Spring/Summer. This time around, the look is less crafty and more sophisticated. A wooden wedge combined with shiny silver or bright patent, for example, is all you need to update this season's wardrobe.

BOTTEGA VENETA


BOTTEGA VENETA


CAROLINA HERRERA

GUCCI


HERMES

Belts

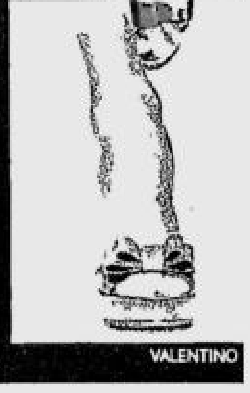
Thick, thin, on the waist or on the hips, looped twice or more, belts are hotter than ever! Join the bandwagon! It's about time!

BOTTEGA VENETA

MICHAEL KORS

GIAMBATTISTA VALLI

GIAMBATTISTA VALLI


VALENTINO

Beribboned beauties

Bows are back in style! The good news: They now come in a myriad of styles that range from the girly to the sophisticated. Wear them on your hair, as a belt or even on your shoes for some feminine flair.

LIFESTYLE

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FASHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!

SIENNA and Savannah Miller

Sibling revelry

ACTRESS SIENNA MILLER IS CHANNELING her energies into a ready-to-wear line called Twenty8Twelve by s. miller, which was named after her date of birth. Together with her sister Savannah, who is an alumnus of design school Saint Martins, the fashion savant is creating an 80-piece collection that will be launched in Fall 2007.

Their first salvo in the design arena will feature a collection of denim, tailored jackets, knitwear, dresses and outerwear inspired by diverse images of Dickensian London, Patti Smith and Beat poetry.

The duo will also feature an artist each season. For their hand tags, illustrator David Cooper created impressions of Sienna wearing the collection. And for a touch of whimsy, the sisters are even planning to hide love poems in the pockets of jeans.

According to both Sienna and Savannah, they are equally involved in the design process and are, thus far, enjoying the experience of working together.

Holiday cheers!

Toast the coming new year with Absolut Vodka bling-bling!

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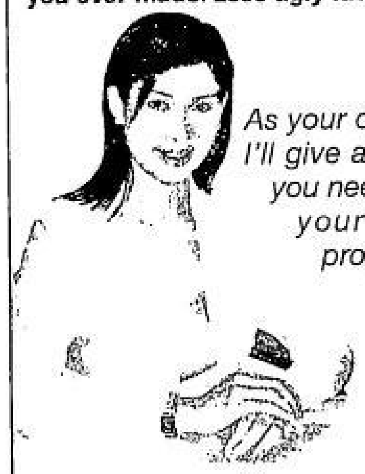

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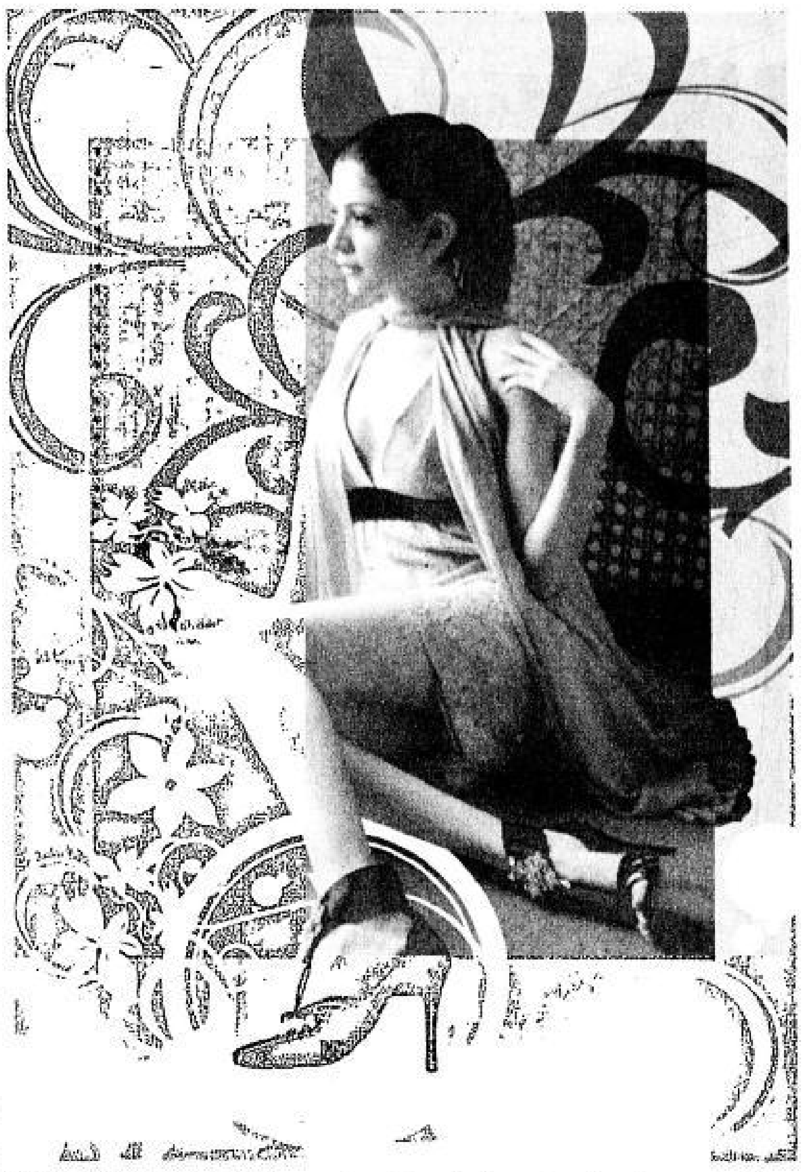
Heart and sole

Master designer Cesar Gaupo comes up with his own line of shoes

THE FAÇADE SHOE. Sleek, stylish stiletto in alligator-stamped kidskin accentuated by a panel of sage-green crocodile leather



THE CATHEDRAL. Divine masterpiece in elegant satin, adorned with luminous Swarovksi crystals

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

CESAR GAUPO IS UNDENIABLY one of the most popular, prolific and celebrated designers in the history of Philippine fashion. He has been an industry leader for several decades now and is known for his distinct craftsmanship combined with effortless style. His experience includes both couture and ready-to-wear and he has even gone international as the creative director for Shanghai Tang.

And now, his latest foray into the world of shoe design promises to be yet another successful undertaking. Manila's fashion elite is thrilled that the designer has finally unveiled his meticulously designed shoe collection aptly called "Gaupo."

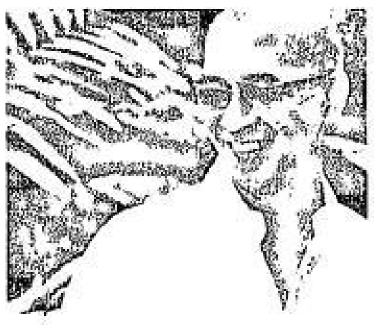
"A woman who possesses a clear sense of self and steps up to the plate is very attractive. She is an individual whose style is secondary to her identity. I am inspired by her. And this is the heart and soul—or should I say sole—of the Gaupo Shoe collection," says the well-loved designer.

For the 2007 holiday collection of Gaupo Shoe couture, the master designer also draws inspiration from the world's grand edifices, with each pair, a fluid adaptation of structural accomplishment. Form perfectly meets function and structure defines composition, as principles of modern architecture find expression in leather, satin and suede. Sensual, sleek and fearless, this holiday collection seeks to entice today's most cosmopolitan woman.

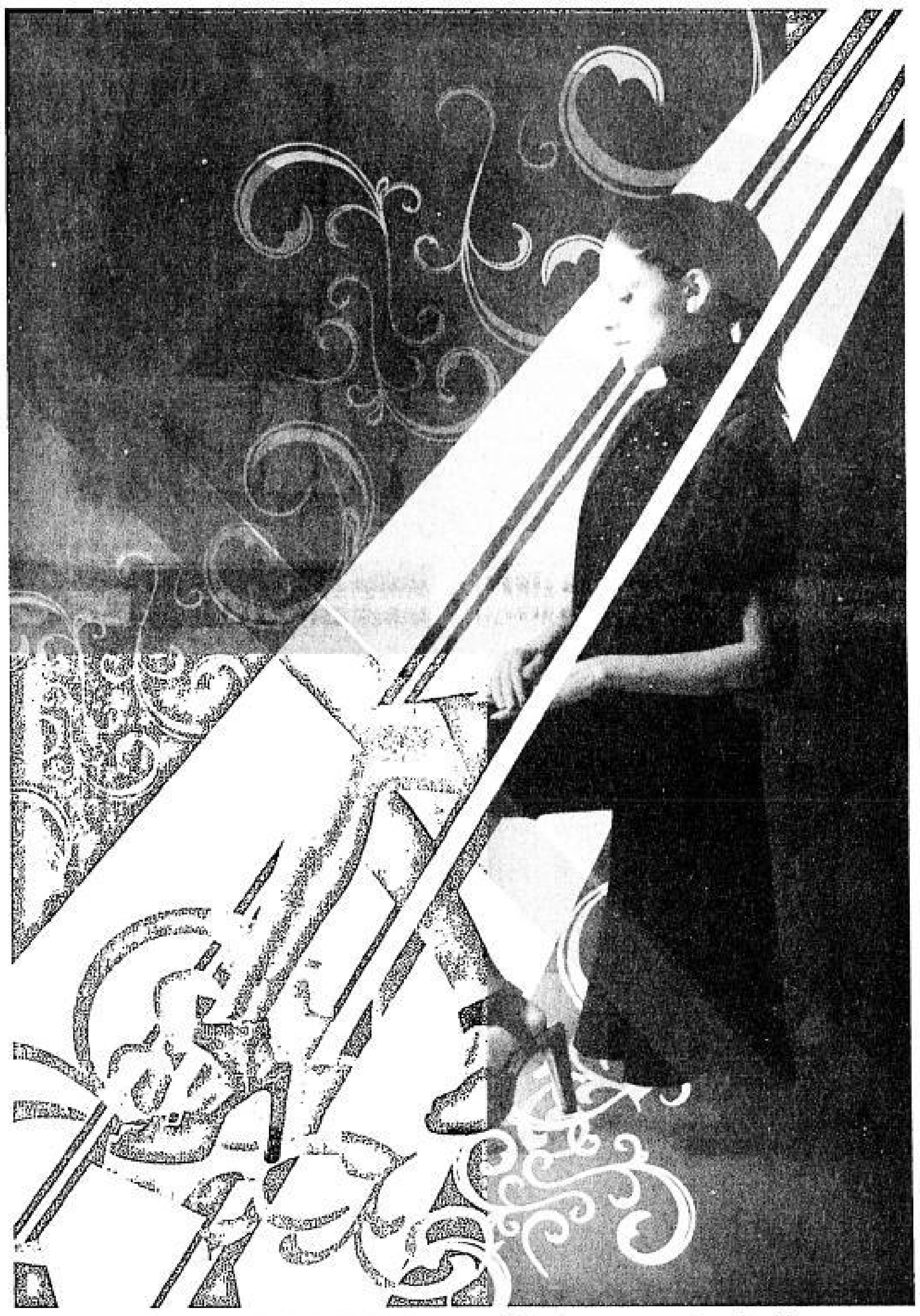
Check out the Gaupo Holiday Collection at the basement of The Peninsula Manila or call brand manager Terry Falcon 09175182120 for an appointment.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

THE ACCOLADE. Glamorous stiletto in sumptuous purple suede, held together by sexy tasseled laces

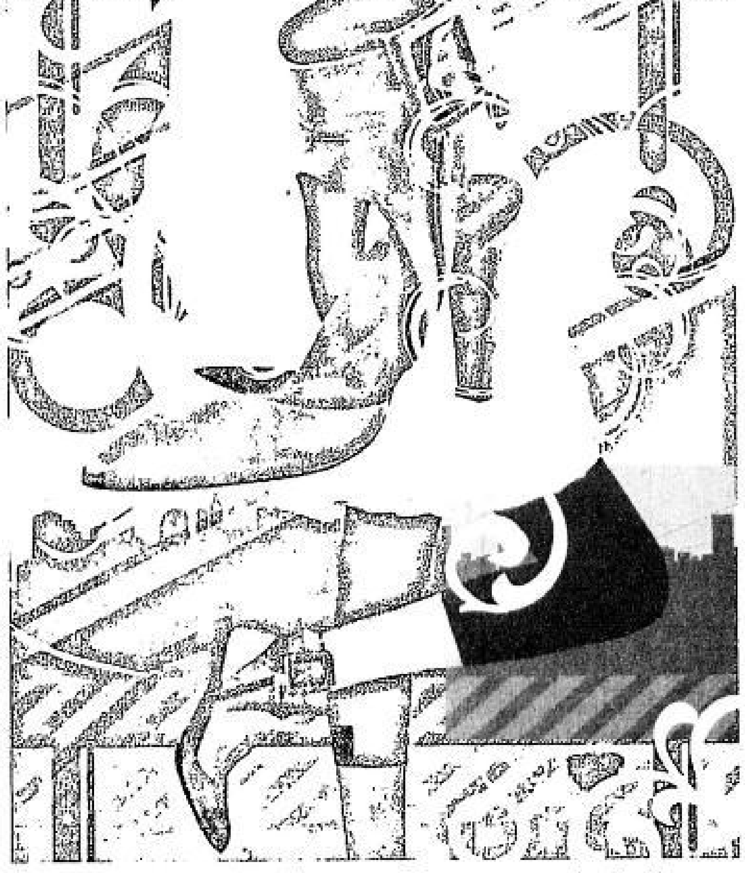


RENOWNED fashion designer Cesar Gaupo launches The Gaupo Shoe Collection with a new showroom at the basement of The Peninsula Manila.



THE MOTIF. Platform sandal in cinnamon suede and gold-tone jacquard, detailed in slender buckled straps

THE PINNACLE. Exotic stingray made more lavish by lush swatches of black suede entwined at the ankle



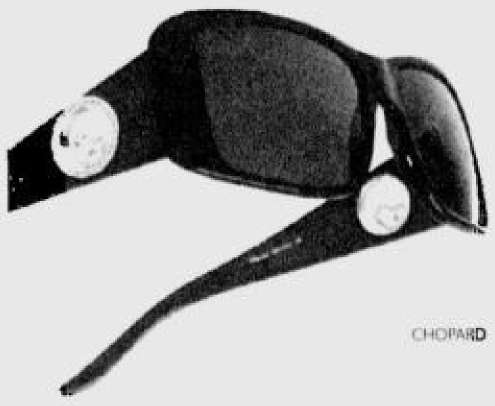
THE ICON. A definitive silhouette of the season, embodied in supple bronze leather and accented by contemporary accents

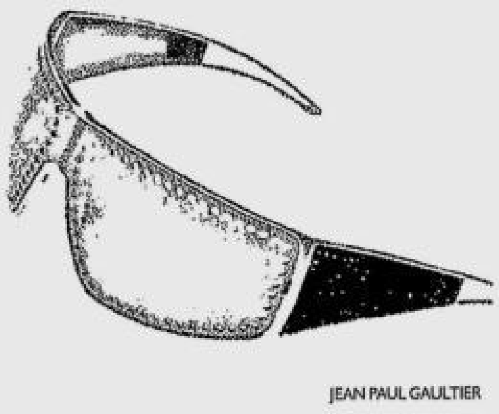
Sizzling shades

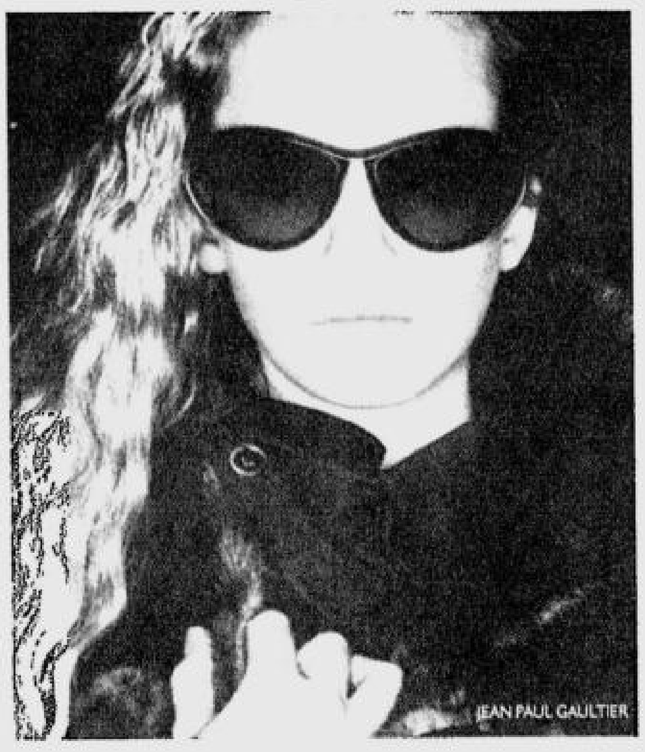
From page G4

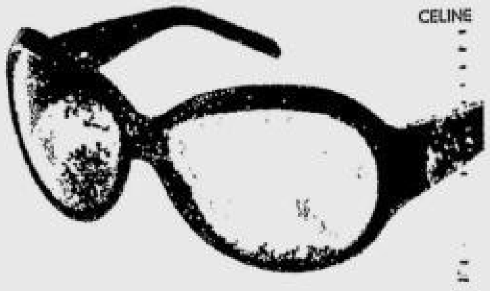
CELINE

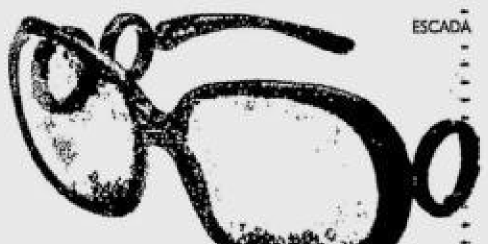
Flash dance
Protect your eyes from the harsh sun by deflecting it with an equally strong ray of sparkle! Gold details and diamond-studded lenses are key.


CHOPARD


JEAN PAUL GAULTIER


JEAN PAUL GAULTIER


CELINE

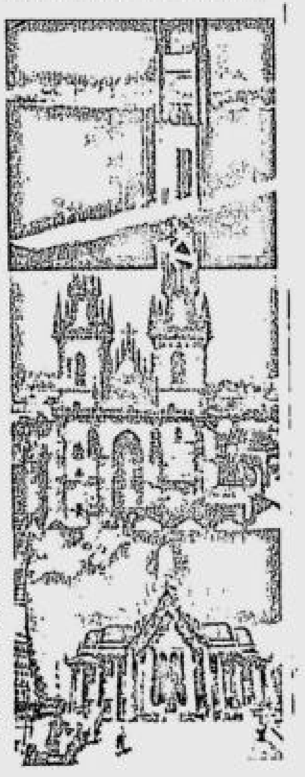

ESCADA

Incognito
Big, black sunglasses are the perfect undercover accessory.

'Tis The Season To Go Shopping At Araneta Center

Discover the spirit of the season as Araneta Center presents fun-filled Holiday celebrations for the entire family.

Join the "Christmas Around The World" promo and win free trips to the US, Europe and Asia. Every P500 purchase at Araneta Center lets you join. Use your BPI Express Credit Card to double your chances of winning.

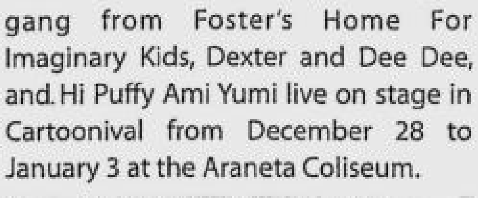


Be enchanted by Mandarin Oriental's Giant Gingergread House at the Activity Area of Gateway Mall.

Experience the ultimate in unique Holiday shopping at the Ali Mall Absolutely Christmas Bazaar where shoppers are sure to find something for everyone on their list.

Meet and greet Santa Claus every Saturday and Sunday until December 24 from 3 to 6 pm at Gateway Mall and 3 to 7 pm at Ali Mall and Farmers Plaza.

Catch your favorite Cartoon Network characters like the Powerpuff Girls, the gang from Foster's Home For Imaginary Kids, Dexter and Dee Dee, and Hi Puffy Ami Yumi live on stage in Cartoonival from December 28 to January 3 at the Araneta Coliseum.



And don't forget to check out the dazzling displays of lights and the special Holiday window dressings that adorn the 'Parolan' shops alongside Farmers Market.

Join in the many festive extravaganzas sure to put you in the Christmas spirit! Thrill to the sights and sounds of the Holiday Season at Araneta Center!

For more information, log on to www.aranetacenter.net or www.gatewaymall.com.ph

OPEN 24 HOURS

Farmers Market

BIG ON FRESH!
BIG ON VALUE!

Stop for a visit.
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The Freshest Fish,
Meat, Fruits & Vegetables

Live Seafood flown in
daily from Roxas City

Mouthwatering delicacies
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BELEN LIGHTING AND
DAMPA 1ST ANNIVERSARY

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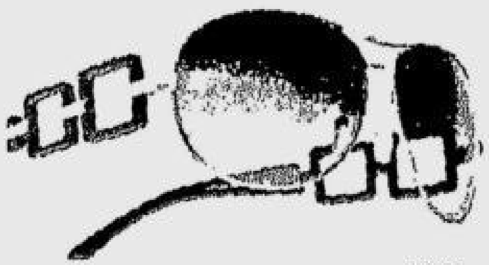
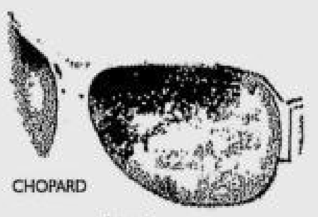
CHOPARD

JEAN PAUL GAULTIER



ESCADA

Color me bad
Opt for bright-colored frames this summer!



CHOPARD

Sizzling shades

ESCADA

ESCADA

By Jenni Epperson

DESIGNERS HAVE A LOT TO thank the paparazzi for. Because of these shutterbugs' relentless pursuit of Hollywood hotties, many of the stars have resorted to wearing big, bold and dark sunnies.

Gargantuan frames worn by celebrities have become walking billboards of fashion houses and other eyewear companies. New styles, colors and materials are produced faster than you can say "cheese!" Jackie O. sunglasses have become the ultimate amulet (next to a court order) for celebrities trying to fend off blinding flashes and unwanted photographers.

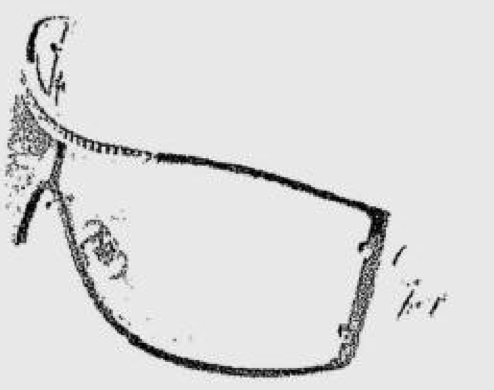
Derigo—makers of designer eyewear such as Chopard, Celine, La Perla, Chopard,Givenchy, Escada, Fila, Ermenegildo Zegna, Etro and Jean Paul Gaultier—recently unveiled its Spring-Summer collection, which spells big and bold!

Rainbow hues and plastic frames are next year's biggest statement. Gem-encrusted temples and metal frames will continue their popularity, while smaller frames will slowly creep into next year's must-have list. Vintage-inspired sunglasses will also become a hit.

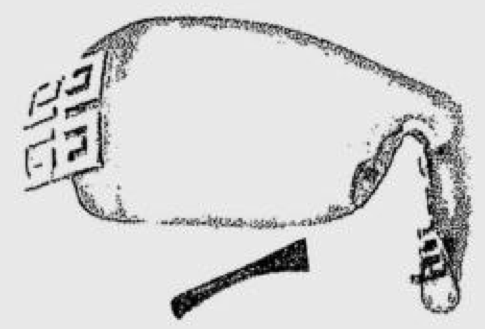
Given the variety of eyewear available, it would be wise to choose a frame that best suits your face and your personality. In the end, it doesn't matter if you're not hounded by the paparazzi like the stars do. You still have to protect your eyes from the blinding light of the sun.

Available in Ideal Vision Centers and Les Lunettes de Paris in Podium.

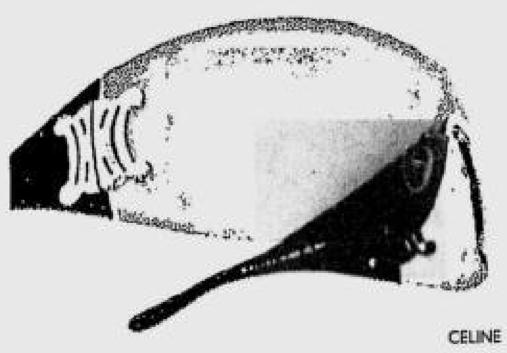
I see stars
Gem-encrusted and Swarovski-sparkled temples spell superstar!



CHOPARD



GIVENCHY



CELINE

CELINE

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your personal store
Vacuum Flask 450ml
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3pc Handkerchief
P99
Slippers (4 designs)
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add these to your wish list
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P899
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P399
Pooh
Bathroom Scale
P289
only P99 each
with any purchase @ Watsons

Contributing editors: Apples Aberin-Sadhwani and Jenni Epperson
Editor: Chelo Banal-Formoso

LIFESTYLE

FASHION

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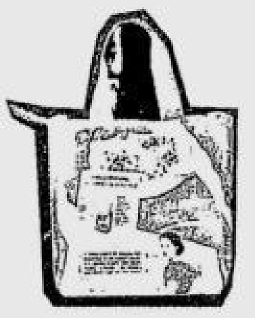
Text [illegible] your feedback:
inquirer life name/[illegible]/city/message to 2207 (G[illegible]e) or [illegible]83 (Smart)

BLACK knit bolero, P799; cream with black floral shirt, P849; black skirt with cream piping, P999. All clothes from Kashieca

Christmas treats

What's Inside

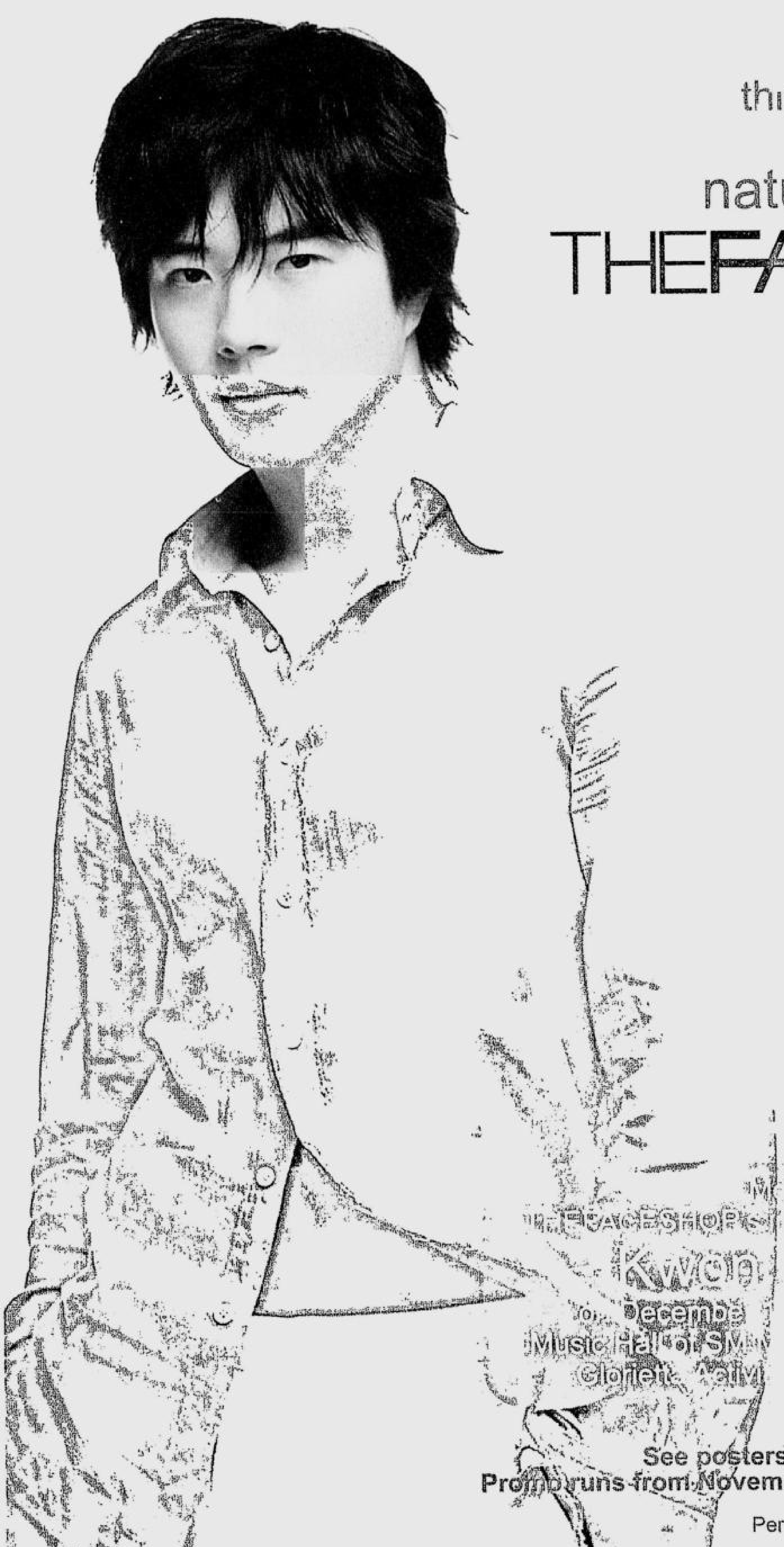
KASHIECA'S sparkling fashion /H2



HUMAN gift ideas /H3

A FIX makeover /H4

THE-FACESHOP beauty booty /H4



this Christmas

natural story
THEFACESHOP
Presents

Kwon Sang Woo
2006
ASIA
TOUR

Christmas
in
Manila

See posters for promo details.
Promo runs from November 25 up to December 17, 2006.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.4764 Series of 2006.

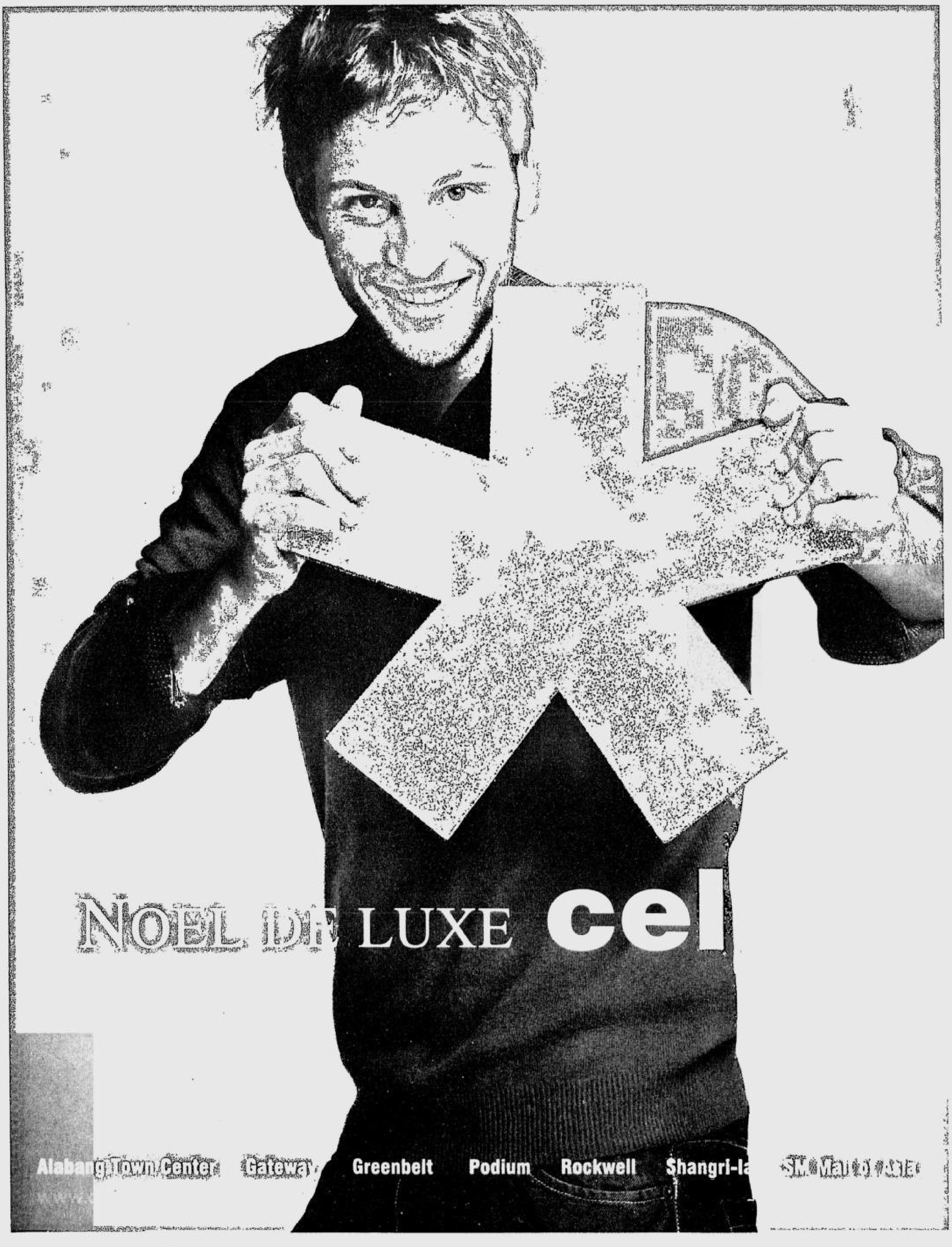
PINK blouse with billowy sleeves, P799; dark-brown tank with gold rhinestones, P499; brown skirt, P899; stones, crystals and beads necklace, P2,850. All items from Kashieca. Charles & Keith beige pumps, P1,629

Kashieca clothes are the accessories themselves

RED tank with silver rhinestone neckline, P699; white knit bolero (worn as inner top), P799; black bead chain necklace, P650; gray pants, P989.75. All items Kashieca. Charles & Keith brown strap wedges, P1,799

Photography Sara Black • Fashion direction Millet Arzaga • Hair and makeup Weng de Guzman /Bench Fix Salon • Hair assistance Louie "Mauie" Dudero and Kenneth Dagohoy /Bench Fix Salon • Model Ana Sideco/PMAP • Clothes Kashieca Shoes Charles & Keith • Background features Blue 2 Pop-up Book by David A. Carter, available in all PowerBooks branches (Arnaiz, Megamall, Alabang and Glorietta)

POWDER-BLUE tee with lace sleeves, P599; pink halter top with cut-out and beads, P799; pants, P899.75; necklace used as bracelet, P450. All items from Kashieca. Charles & Keith cream strap sandals, P1,799



Raz daz

By Allison W. Lopez

'TIS THE SEASON TO
And we don't mea
blinding-kind-of-sparl

With Kashieca's holiday
rely on your long necklaces
dazzle because the clothe
selves.

The girly-girl brand's-bas
basic as it's embellished wi
stones, ribbons, sequins, bu
load, though, because the
found adorning only the n
all, you shouldn't let your cl

Romantic Victorian inspi
ruffled tops donned by Kas
Perhaps a hangover from
toinette"? Stylist Millet Arz
till summer comes.

Deeper shades dominate
are a lot of dark blues, bro
Kashieca's trademark pastel

Snow or no snow, layeri
Knit boleros and cardigan
while leggings under tiny
keep you hot. Another class

"The pieces are good wh
by a party and you came
Though Kashieca's clothes
could also pass as dr
look—thanks to the lovely d

For an all-out sparkle, ch
in gold and silver, or their
has separate blings like pea
you need more. Just don't o
a Christmas tree—but do ha

Dare we sing, deck the ha

GREEN bolero, P799; blue tan
skirt, P999; pearl necklace, P

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zle-
zle!

SPARKLE AND SHINE! the disco-ball-glitz, le.

ollection, you won't have to r big earrings to provide the are *the* accessories them-

c ensemble becomes not-so- h a wonderful mix of rhine- tons, lace. Not a visual over- pretty details are usually cklines and hemlines. After thes wear you.

itions remain, as seen in the eca model Georgina Wilson. he opulence in "Marie An- ga says billowy sleeves are in

he holiday collection. There ns, violets, reds—to go with colored hues.

g is still the key this season. are the perfect cover-ups, kirts, and killer boots, will option are tunics.

you suddenly have to swing om the malls," adds Millet. are decidedly casual, they ssed-down, relaxed party tails!

k out their metallic pouches ittery skinnies. Kashieca also and-crystal necklaces in case rdo, lest you be mistaken for fun decorating yourself. s with bows and frillies?

k top, P679; brown printed ,500. All items from Kashieca.

Kitschy Christmas

By Genea Padilla *Contributor*

ARE YOU TIRED OF GIVING THE SAME OLD GIFTS AND tokens for the holidays? Inject a bit of fun in your Christmas list by throwing in a dash of festive kitsch. Try out this assortment of useful yet somewhat quirky gift ideas that will inspire cheer without busting the pocket.

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

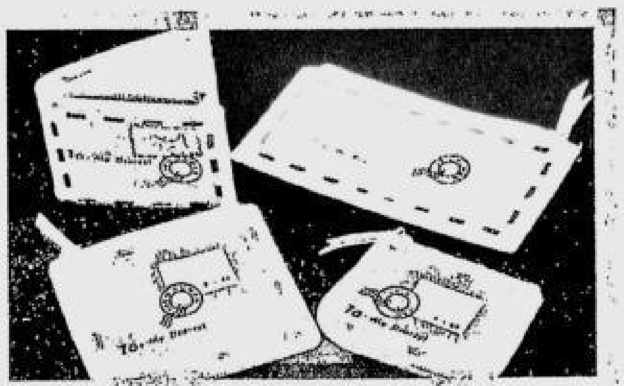
Sweet little nothings

Though it says "i think the world of you," the recipient of these shiny kits will surely be thinking of the giver every time he gathers the odds and ends.

POUCHES, P169 EACH

Holiday mail

[illegible]



Bag lady

Is anyone hungry for some retro kitsch? give them a taste of the '50s with this cereal box tote. Its bold colors and yummy graphics will surely give the retrophile a nostalgic turn.

Interesting reading

MEN'S CARTOON BOXERS, P249, LADIES CARTOON BIKINI, P129; CARTOON PURSE, P129

The funny pages are welcome just about anywhere, so here are a few more applications and some interesting "packaging" ideas.

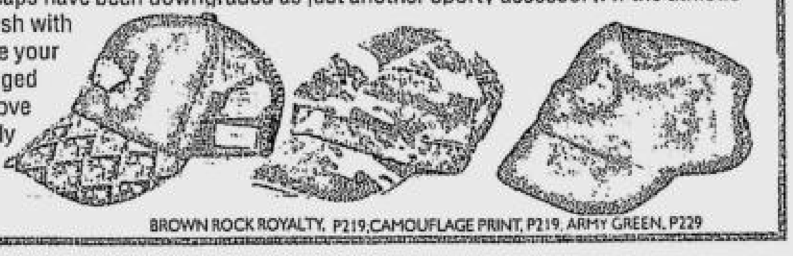
Fit to a T

[illegible]

TIRED
READING
ROCK TIL YOU DROP

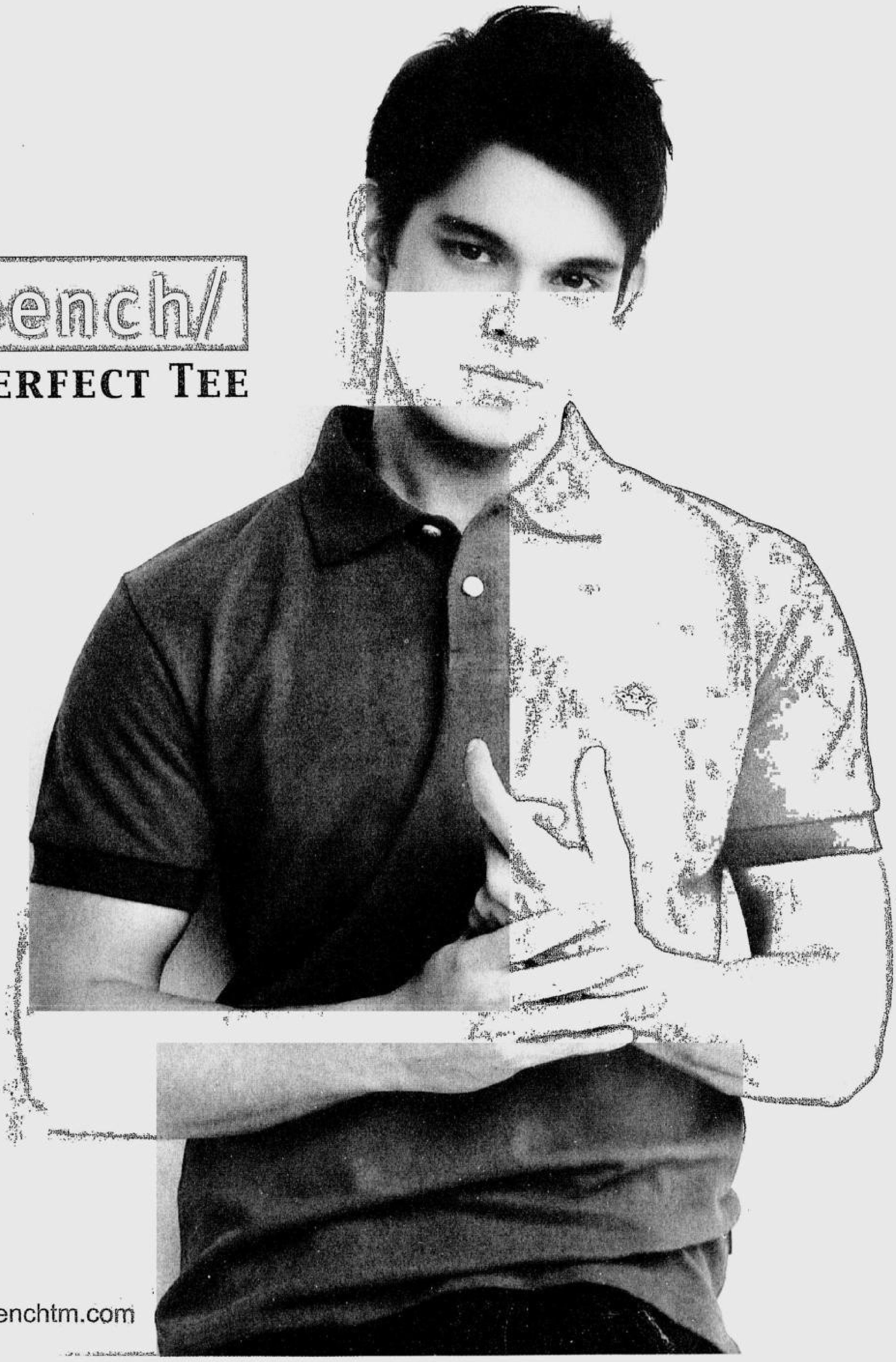
Capping things off

For something so useful and necessary (given that sun exposure is unavoidable in our particularly sunny corner), caps have been downgraded as just another sporty accessory. If the athletic logos on the caps clash with customary attire, give your headgear-disadvantaged friends or kin some love with these fashionably au courant caps.



BROWN ROCK ROYALTY, P219,CAMOUFLAGE PRINT, P219, ARMY GREEN, P229

bench/
PERFECT TEE
www.benchtm.com



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Merry makeover

By Gem Padilla
Contributor

IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL but also the busiest time of the year. What with putting up Christmas decor, party preparations, gift shopping, etc., looking one's best is often left at the bottom of the list. Gift yourself with a fantastic look and spread holiday cheer as you hit the yuletide party scene.

It's not just about having the perfect dress (although it helps) or getting a pair of sexy heels (can't really hurt). It's about getting a holiday touch-up.

Hair

Start afresh with a new haircut and throw in some highlights for an instant new look. This holiday season, Bench Fix Salon head makeup and hair stylist Paolo Olandez recommends going to the warmer tones for subtle highlights like chocolate brown, plum, red and caramel.

Makeup

Shimmer is still in. Just make sure not to overdo it. Don't get carried away with all the glittery cosmetics, experiment with one or two and be content. Keep in mind that you want to glow and sparkle this season, not blend in with the decor.

Another key rule: never play up both the eyes and the lips at the same time. By putting the spotlight on both, you'll most likely end up looking like a queen—in drag! Set off your light eye makeup with dark-red lipstick or go nude with just a touch of shimmery lip gloss for smoky or heavily lined eyes and you're all set to go.

With the demands of the season, a makeover doesn't have to be mission impossible.

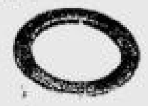
Go during your lunch break or after office hours, get it done bit by bit or in one big blowout, there's always a Bench Fix Salon near you.

It's the happiest season of all. Go and look wonderful!

Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

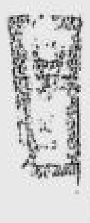
Makeover makeup by Thefaceshop

PHYTOGENIC Foundation with SPF 10 in Creamy Beige, P795

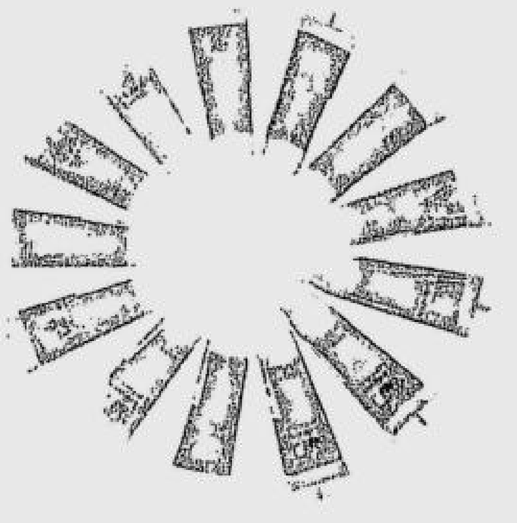

BLACK Label Eyeshadow in Night Pearl Violet, P355

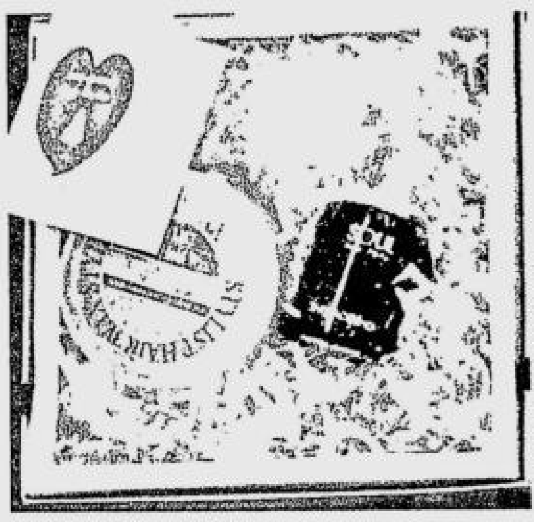
BLACK Label Blusher in Glittering Brown, P355

BLACK Label Lipstick in Pinkish 13, P355


BLACK Label Delicious Lip Gloss, P195

Model Leitz Altuna
Hair and makeup Paolo Olandez, Bench Fix Salon, Glorietta
Venue F Salon, Greenbelt 3
Clothes Kashieca
Product photos Ramon Lindo


DELICIOUS Lip Gloss, P195 each


SOUL perfume, P695 and styling wax, P355

Photos by Ramon Lindo

The gift of beauty

By Gem Padilla
Contributor

NO CLUE AS TO what to give your friends this Christmas? Tired of giving away T-shirts, music CDs or, heaven forbid, fruitcake?

Beauty writer Julyne Derrick says "you can never go wrong by gifting beauty products. After all, have you ever gotten a luxurious soap that you did not use?"

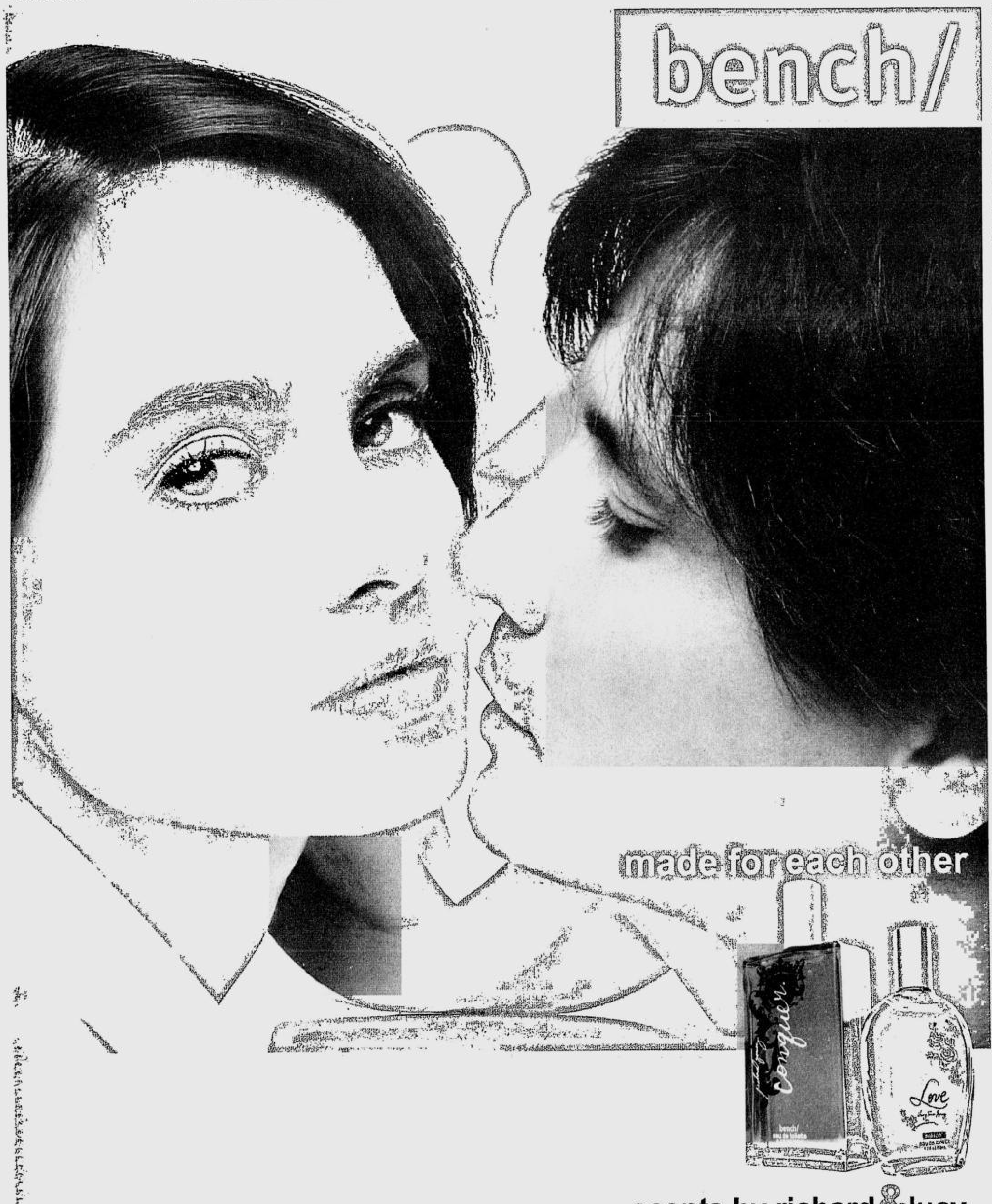
Fabulous beauty products are usually something we feel guilty buying for ourselves but are so delighted to receive as presents.

In the spirit of the season, get started and create your own luxurious beauty gift baskets. Check out the newest cosmetic retail brand Thefaceshop, with over a thousand products for skin and hair care, and cosmetics.

You can make a nearly endless combination of packages that will suit both men and women. What are you waiting for? Start filling those baskets with sumptuous goodies and let the pampering begin.

ARSAINTE lip and eye contour cream, P995 and moisturizing booster cream, P995

CLASSIC Homme Set Moisturizing Emulsion, P845 (above) and Moisturizing Toner, P845 (below)



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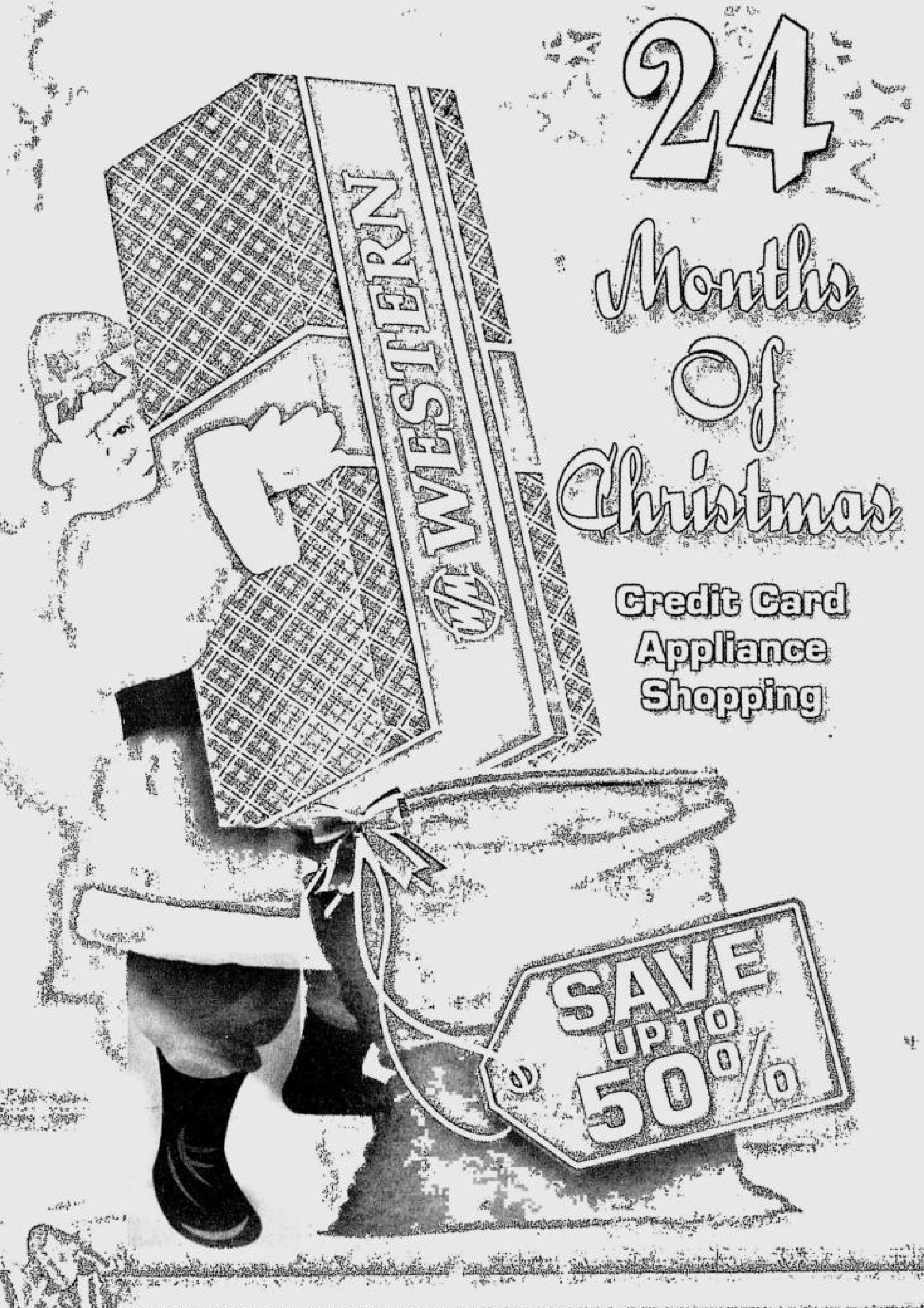

24 Months Of Christmas

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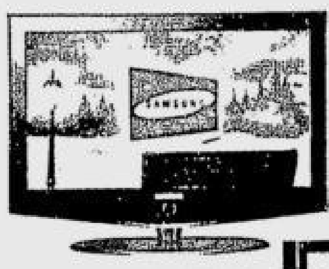
BORDEAUX SERIES



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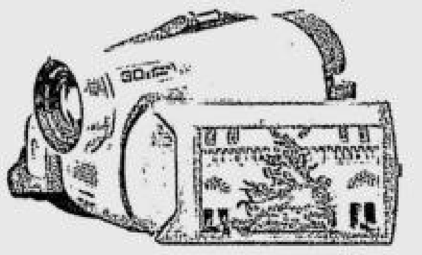
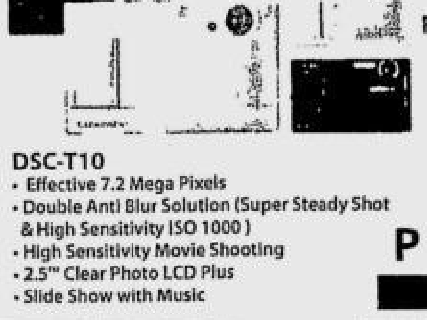


Free KC Table Top Calendar 2007
SONY Gear Up PROMO



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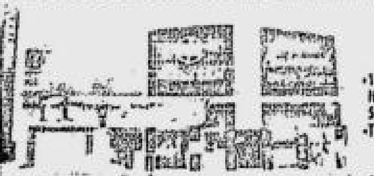
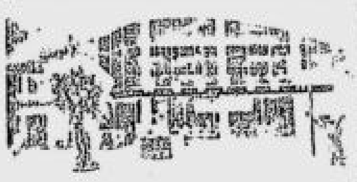
For Your Christmas Shopping, We Have 14 Branches to Serve You



- 12 Missouri St., Northeast Greenhills, San Juan
- Tel: 726-6115
726-7855
727-2969
- Fax: 727-4187

MAKATI

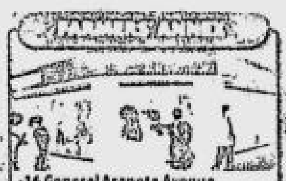


- 1028 Arnaiz Ave. (formerly Pasay Road) corner Ponce Street, Makati City
- Tel: 889-8746 to 48
817-9506
- Fax: 889-8749

COMMONWEALTH

- Ground Floor, Ever Gotesco, Commonwealth Ave., Batasan Hills, Quezon City
- Tel: 931-5650 / 931-5996
- Fax: 931-5669

FARMERS ANNEX



- 16 General Araneta Avenue, Farmers Market, Cubao, Quezon City
- Tel: 911-0771/ 439-0060
- Fax: 911-2585

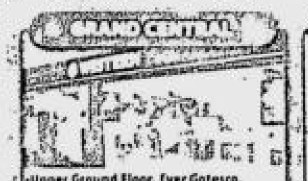
FARMERS PLAZA

- Upper Ground Floor, New Farmers Plaza, Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City
- Tel: 911-1915/ 995-8714
- Fax: 911-1917

FESTIVAL SUPERMALL

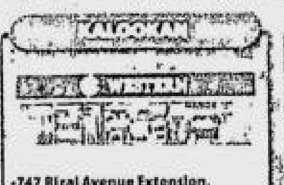
- 3rd Floor, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City
- Tel: 842-1327/ 850-3746
- Fax: 850-3758

GRAND CENTRAL



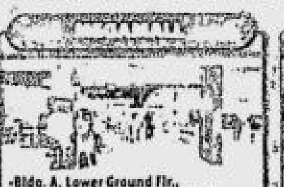
- Upper Ground Floor, Ever Gotesco, Grand Central Complex, Rizal Ave. Ext., Kalookan City
- Tel: 364-5341/ 364-5303/ 363-3623
- Fax: 366-4502

KALOOKAN



- 747 Rizal Avenue Extension, Kalookan City
- Tel: 361-6657/ 361-3055/
361-2766
- Fax: 361-2751

MEGAMALL



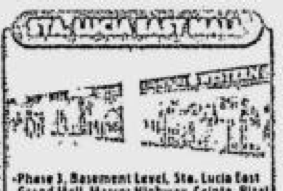
- Bldg. A, Lower Ground Flr., SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- Tel: 634-1733/ 634-6532/
635-2071
- Fax: 638-4210

- 178 P. Tuazon Boulevard corner 8th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City
- Tel: 911-5551/ 912-7829/
913-2577
- Fax: 911-5553

C.M. RECTO

- 1421-1425 C.M. Recto Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila
- Tel: 711-5671 to 74/
712-6295 to 98
- Fax: 711-5675

STA. LUCIA EAST MALL



- Phase 3, Basement Level, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Marcos Highway, Cainta, Rizal
- Tel: 645-1582/ 646-1415/
645-1961/ 645-1759
- Fax: 645-8396

STA. ROSA CITY LAGUNA

- 2nd Floor, Target Mall, Balibago, Sta. Rosa City, Laguna
- Tel: (49) 534-3028
- Fax: (02) 886-1514

- 34 Morato St., San Francisco Del Monte Quezon City
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- Fax: 414-9075/ 412-8711

1-2

WESTERN

24 X'MAS FREEBIES

TO GO WITH MANY DEALS

SAVE UP TO 50%

Many Freebies for a Merrier Christmas!

20" LCD TV FREE
w/ selected SAMSUNG LCD Tvs

29" FLAT CTV FREE
w/ selected SAMSUNG or SHARP LCD TVs

21" FLAT CTV FREE
w/ selected SAMSUNG or SHARP LCD TVs

iPod VIDEO FREE
w/ selected SHARP LCD TVs

HOME THEATER SYSTEM FREE
w/ a SANSUI 32" or 37" LCD TV or PIONEER Plasma TV

DVD PLAYER FREE
W/ selected CTVs from PANASONIC or SHARP Big Size LCD TVs

MP3 PLAYER 256MB FREE
W/ selected PIONEER Home Theater & DVD Component Systems

MP3 PLAYER FREE
w/ selected SHARP Flat CTVs

CAMERA TRIPOD FREE
w/ selected Digital Video Cameras from JVC, SONY, CANON and PANASONIC

MIC & KARAOKE VCDs FREE
w/ selected JVC Component Systems

SONY GIFT VOUCHERS FREE
w/ selected SONY products

TV RACK FREE
On a wide selection of CTVs

DEEP FRYER FREE
w/ a FEDDERS or KOPPEL Window-Type Aircon

RICE COOKER FREE
With selected purchases from SHARP, SANYO, GARANT & IMARFLEX

MICROWAVE OVEN FREE
With a SANYO Washing Machine

GAS STOVE FREE
With selected SAMSUNG No-Frost Refs

FLAT IRON FREE
With selected Washing Machines from PANASONIC, SHARP & SAMSUNG

INSECT ZAPPER FREE
With selected GE refs

GROUND FAN FREE
With selected purchases from SHARP, SANYO & SAMSUNG

DESK FAN FREE
With selected purchases from SAMSUNG, KOLIN, SANYO & PANASONIC

KETTLE FREE
w/ CONDURA or KELVINATOR Ref or SHARP Micro[illegible]oven

VACUUM CLEANER FREE
With a FEDDERS Split-Type Aircon

SINGLE BURNER GAS STOVE FREE
With PANASONIC Ref or Freezer

LPG REGULATOR FREE
With GARANT Dual Gas Stove

AND MANY MANY MORE...

SAVINGS TO THE MAX

LIMITED STOCKS ONLY

SONY
DSC-T9
BEFORE: P32,999
NOW: P27,999
SAVE: P5,000
P2,333.25
12 mos. 0%
FREE
LCS-BDA
KK-LC3
P3,000 Gift Check + P5,000 Printer Voucher

Panasonic
DMC-FX9
6.0 Megapixel Digital Still Camera
BEFORE: P26,999
NOW: P19,379
SAVE: P7,620
P1,614.92
12 mos. 0%
FREE
256MB SD CARD

Canon
IXUS 430
4.0 Megapixel Digital Still Camera
BEFORE: P20,950
NOW: P14,500
SAVE: P6,450
P1,208.34
12 mos. 0%
FREE
CF128MB + Camera case + Neckstrap + Battery Pack

JVC
20"
[50.80cm]

AV-20NN15	P7,990
XV-N322SL DVD Player	P5,080
	P13,070

NOW: P9,490
SAVE: P3,580
P790.84
12 mos. 0%

SAMSUNG
42"
PS-42D5
42 Plasma TV
BEFORE: P164,900
NOW: P144,900
SAVE: P20,000
P12,075.00
12 mos. 0%
P6,037.50
24 mos. 0%
FREE
(Cash / Straight Charge / 12mos.0% only)
Samsung Cellphone (D820)
ADD-ONS
(Cash Only)
Add P5,000 for HTQ20
or
Add P15,000 for HTQ25

SANYO
BEST BUY
14"
[35.56cm]
14SE1
- Full AV Stereo
- 2-tone Colour Cabinet

SRP: P5,195
P865.84
6 mos. 0%

SONY
Gear Up your Handycam PROMO
FREE
Body Bag
DVD-R
DVD-RW
DVD Case
DCR-DVD605
- 1/6" Advanced HAD CCD
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar Lens
- 20x Optical Zoom/ 800x Digital Zoom
- DVD+RW/ DVD-RW/ DVD-R multi-format compatibility
- Easy Handycam

P 1,541.63
24 mos 0%
P 36,999

SAMSUNG
ADD P5,000
GET HTTQ20 HOME THEATER
WS32Z40HN [81.28cm]
32" SLIM FIT TV
SRP P59,995
P4,999.59
12 mos. 0%
FREE
TV RACK & 16" GROUND FAN
(FOR CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY)

For Institutional Sales please contact Mr. Ruel Iponla at Tel. No. 373-4501 Local 49 Fax No. 414-9526
Email: sales@western.com.ph

I - 3

WESTERN

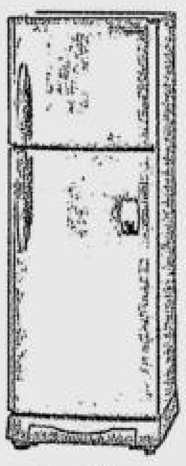
GE Asian Top Mount

FREE
Tank Insect Zapper

SRP P28,495
P 2,374.59
12mos. 0%

Panasonic
ideas for life

FREE
Garant Single Burner

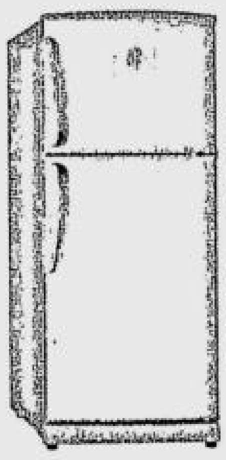


NR-B805DC
- 8 cu.ft. (233L)
- Semi-automatic Defrost System
- Anti-bacterial Water Dispenser
- Deodorizer with Stylish Holder
- Anti-rust Finished Door w/ Elegant Design
- Built-in Platform with Adjustable Leg
- Adjustable Slide-out Storage Shelves
- Utility Top Table

SRP: P15,999

Snowy White / Titanium Grey / Metallic Blue

P1,333.25
12 mos. 0%



SANYO

SR-F42H/M
- 10.2 cu.ft. (280L)
- Frost-Free
- Platinum Ion Deodorizer
- Finger Print Free
- Transparent Shelves
- Stainless Steel
- Low Energy Consumption

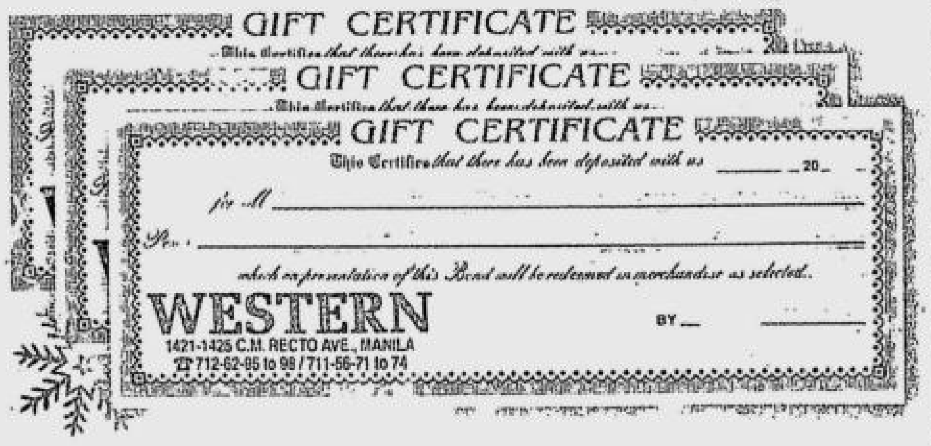
FREE
12pc Dinner Set
Rice Cooker

ALSO AVAILABLE IN METALLIC SILVER FINISH

SRP: P23,459
P1,954.92
12 mos. 0%

GE Twin Tub Washing Machine

SRP P7,395
P 616.25
12mos. 0%



GIFT CERTIFICATE

This Certifies that there has been deposited with us ______ 20__

for ____________________

Pesos ____________________

which on presentation of this Bond will be redeemed in merchandise as selected.

WESTERN
1421-1425 C.M. RECTO AVE., MANILA
☎ 712-62-85 to 98 / 711-56-71 to 74

BY ________

WESTERN GIFT CERTIFICATE

Wishing a worry-free, stress-free, time-saving, gift-giving this Yuletide Season? Buying a WESTERN GIFT CERTIFICATE is the convenient answer. Come to our Western Outlets and get a GIFT CERTIFICATE for as low as P500.

Christmas Cool Freebies...

Enjoy all these cool freebies when you buy any EUROTEK product, as a token of appreciation for your continuous support and patronage.

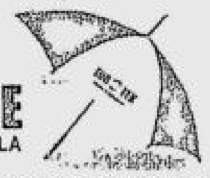
EÜROTEK
"Quality With Style"

PROMO PERIOD RUNS FROM November 15, 2006 to January 15, 2007

Available at leading dealers nationwide

EWM-62W
- 6.2 Kg. wash capacity
- Big size pulsator
- Big wash tub
- Rust-and dent-proof plastic body
- Anti-rat base design

get FREE UMBRELLA



For every purchase of EUROTEK single tub Washing Machine model EWM-62W

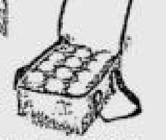
ETW-58BG
- 5.8 Kg. wash capacity
- 5.0 Kg. spin capacity
- Double wall wash tub
- Twin water fall
- Rust-and dent-proof plastic body
- Anti-rat base design

get FREE SPORTS BAG

For every purchase of EUROTEK twin tub Washing Machine model ETW-58BG or ETW-68WH (6.8 Kg. wash capacity)

EPR-90MS
- 90 Liters capacity (3.2 cu. ft.)
- Metallic Silver Finish
- Semi-automatic defrost
- Direct cooling System
- Durable top table
- Adjustable wire shelves
- Ice tray

get FREE COOLER BAG



For every purchase of EUROTEK Personal Refrigerator model EPR-90MS

EUF-756
- 208 Liters capacity (7.5 cu. ft.)
- Safety key lock
- Fast freeze function
- Slide-out wire shelf
- Transparent drain bin
- Roller caster
- 6 Spacious compartment
- Durable top table
- Direct cooling system
- Manual defrost
- Color : White or gray

get FREE CLOSET

For every purchase of EUROTEK Upright Freezer model EUF-756

ECF-298W
- 298 Liters capacity (10.5 cu.ft.)
- Top open door with inner double sliding glass door
- Double wire basket
- Roller caster for easy mobility
- Side drain hole
- Safety key lock
- Anti-Scratch cabinet
- Thicker thermal insulation

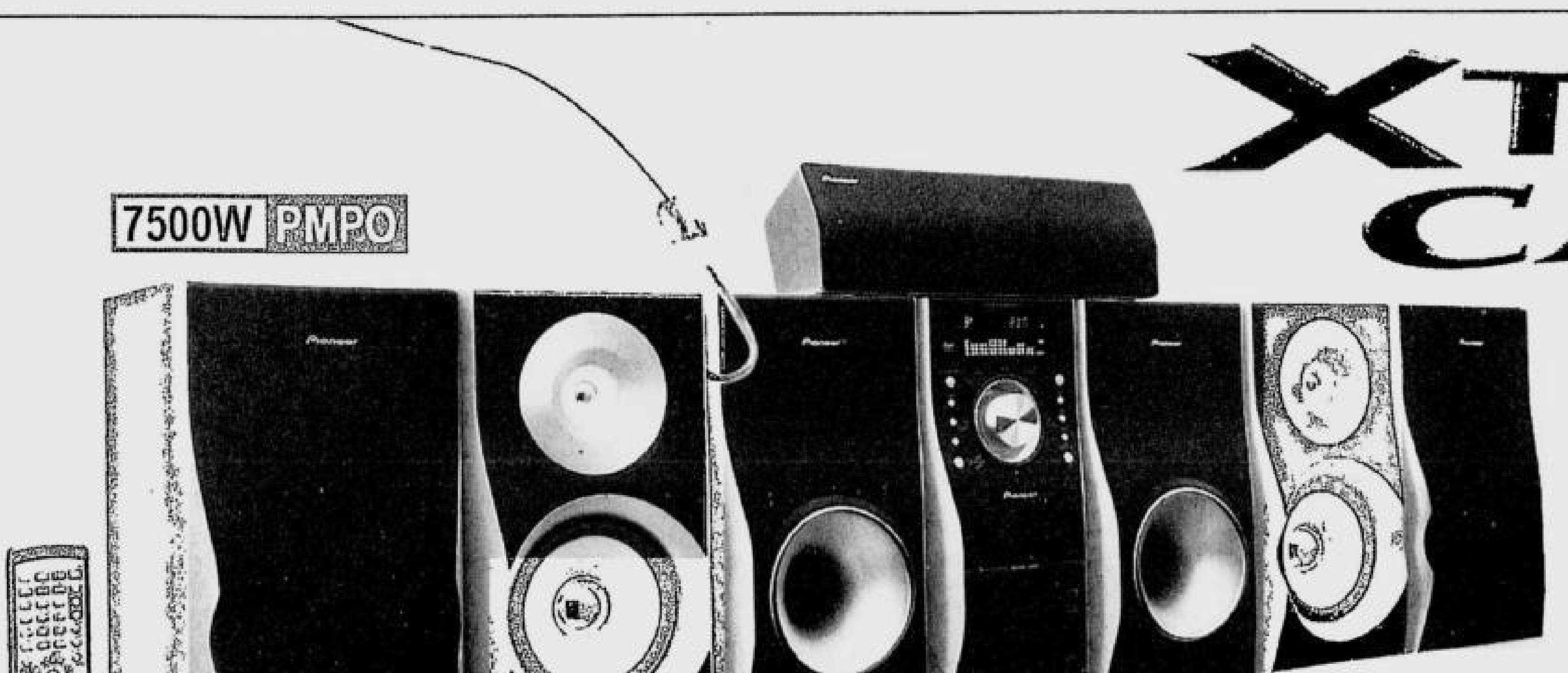
**Model : ECF-208W 208 Liters capacity (7.5 cu ft.)*

get FREE CLOSET

For every purchase of EUROTEK Chest Freezer model ECF-208W or ECF-298W

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4913, Series of 2006

XTREME CATCH!



Fish for the best mini component in town! Pioneer's Innovative X.Boom technology adds extra emphasis to bass reproduction for both music and movies, giving more punch in the low frequencies. Its sleek, black-based design plus the cool, modern styling truly visualizes the power of sound!

EV9DVD 5.1 Channel Speaker DVD Mini-Component with twin subwoofer
- X. Boom & large subwoofers
- USB terminal, Cassette deck & Tuner
- DVD / SVCD / VCD / CD / WMA / MP3 / MPEG-4 AAC / JPEG, DivX, DTS / Dolby Digital / Dolby Pro Logic II compatible
- Full-features Karaoke
- Playlist selection

650W PMPO

MF3DVD 2-speaker DVD Micro-Component
DVD / SVCD / VCD / CD / WMA / MP3 / MPEG-4 AAC / JPEG, DivX compatible

2500W PMPO

EV5DVD 2-speaker DVD Mini-Component
DVD / SVCD / VCD / CD / WMA / MP3 / MPEG-4 AAC / JPEG, DivX compatible

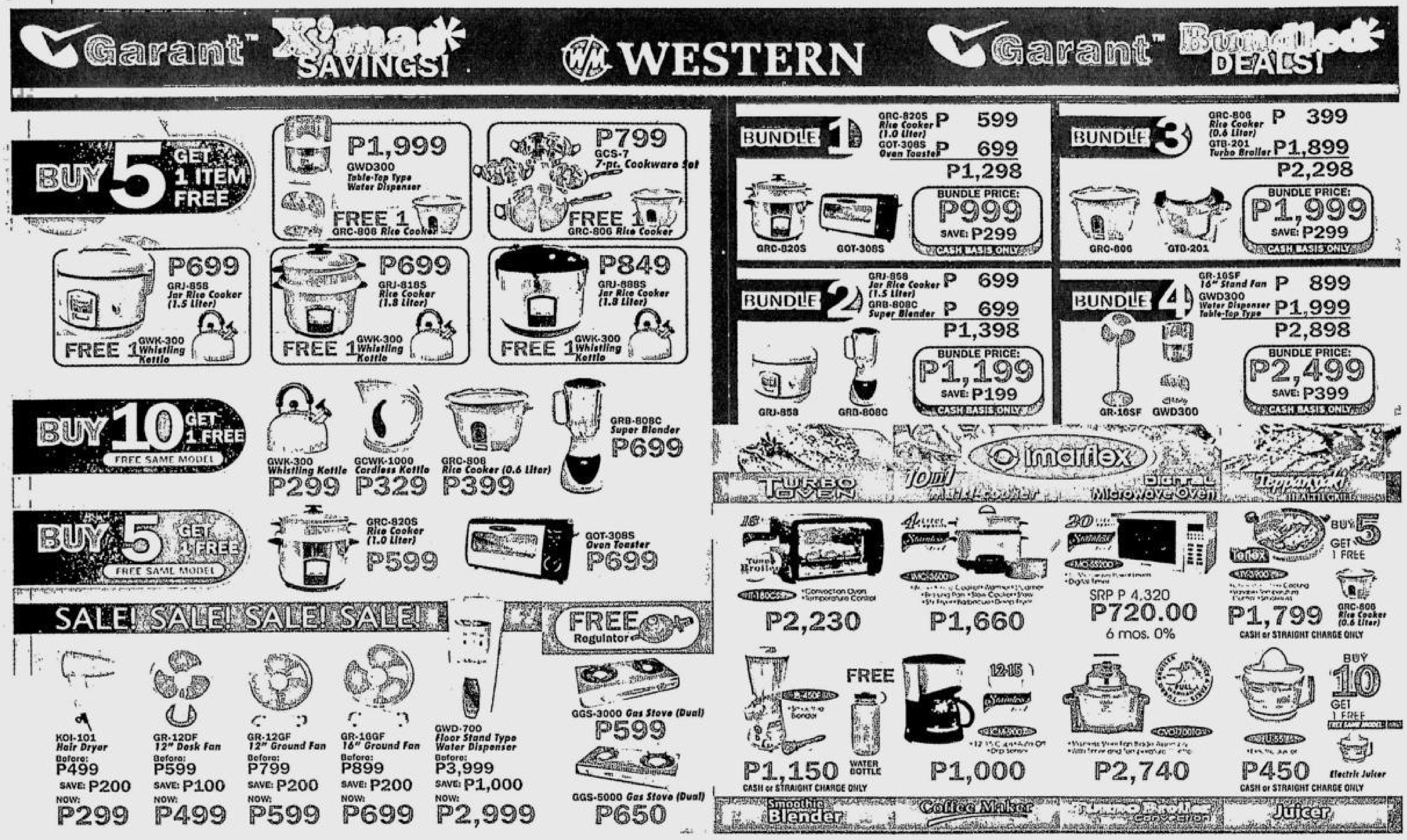
7500W PMPO

EV7DVD 5.1 Channel Speaker DVD Mini-Component
DVD / SVCD / VCD / CD / WMA / MP3 / MPEG-4 AAC / JPEG, DivX, DTS / Dolby Digital / Dolby Pro Logic II compatible

Pioneer *sound.vision.soul*

Available at leading appliance stores nationwide.

http://www.pioneer.com.sg


Garant™ Xmas SAVINGS!

WESTERN

Garant™ Bundled DEALS!

BUY 5 GET 1 ITEM FREE

P1,999
GWD300 Table-Top Type Water Dispenser
FREE 1 GRC-806 Rice Cooker

P799
GCS-7 7-pc. Cookware Set
FREE 1 GRC-806 Rice Cooker

P699
GRJ-858 Jar Rice Cooker (1.5 Liter)
FREE 1 GWK-300 Whistling Kettle

P699
GRJ-818S Rice Cooker (1.8 Liter)
FREE 1 GWK-300 Whistling Kettle

P849
GRJ-888S Jar Rice Cooker (1.8 Liter)
FREE 1 GWK-300 Whistling Kettle

BUY 10 GET 1 FREE
FREE SAME MODEL

GWK-300 Whistling Kettle P299
GCWK-1000 Cordless Kettle P329
GRC-806 Rice Cooker (0.6 Liter) P399
GRB-808C Super Blender P699

BUY 5 GET 1 FREE
FREE SAME MODEL

GRC-820S Rice Cooker (1.0 Liter) P599
GOT-308S Oven Toaster P699

SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE!

FREE Regulator

	KOI-101 Hair Dryer	GR-12DF 12" Desk Fan	GR-12GF 12" Ground Fan	GR-16GF 16" Ground Fan	GWD-700 Floor Stand Type Water Dispenser
Before:	P499	P599	P799	P899	P3,999
SAVE:	P200	P100	P200	P200	P1,000
NOW:	P299	P499	P599	P699	P2,999

GGS-3000 Gas Stove (Dual) P599
GGS-5000 Gas Stove (Dual) P650

BUNDLE 1
GRC-820S Rice Cooker (1.0 Liter) P 599
GOT-308S Oven Toaster P 699
P1,298
BUNDLE PRICE: P999
SAVE: P299
CASH BASIS ONLY
GRC-820S GOT-308S

BUNDLE 2
GRJ-858 Jar Rice Cooker (1.5 Liter) P 699
GRB-808C Super Blender P 699
P1,398
BUNDLE PRICE: P1,199
SAVE: P199
CASH BASIS ONLY
GRJ-858 GRB-808C

BUNDLE 3
GRC-806 Rice Cooker (0.6 Liter) P 399
GTB-201 Turbo Broiler P1,899
P2,298
BUNDLE PRICE: P1,999
SAVE: P299
CASH BASIS ONLY
GRC-806 GTB-201

BUNDLE 4
GR-16SF 16" Stand Fan P 899
GWD300 Water Dispenser Table-Top Type P1,999
P2,898
BUNDLE PRICE: P2,499
SAVE: P399
CASH BASIS ONLY
GR-16SF GWD300

imarflex

TURBO OVEN · 10 in 1 MULTI-COOKER · DIGITAL Microwave Oven · Teppanyaki MULTI GRILL

•Convection Oven •Temperature Control
P2,230

P1,660

•Digital Timer
SRP P 4,320
P720.00
6 mos. 0%

BUY 5 GET 1 FREE
GRC-806 Rice Cooker (0.6 Liter)
P1,799
CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY

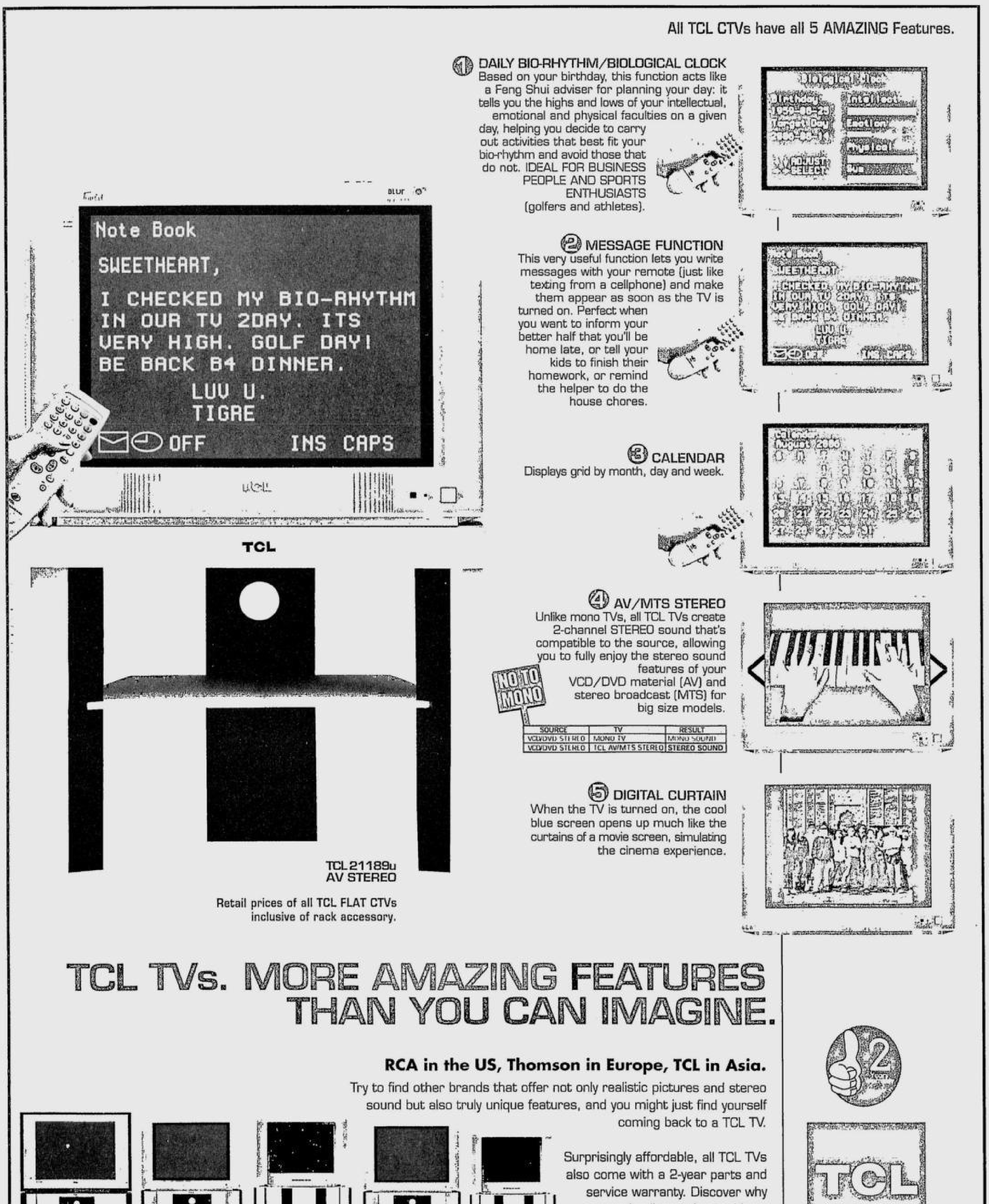
FREE WATER BOTTLE
P1,150
CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY

P1,000

FULL
P2,740

BUY 10 GET 1 FREE
FREE SAME MODEL
Electric Juicer
P450
CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY

Smoothie Blender · Coffee Maker · Turbo Broiler Convection · Juicer


All TCL CTVs have all 5 AMAZING Features.

Note Book
SWEETHEART,
I CHECKED MY BIO-RHYTHM IN OUR TV 2DAY. ITS VERY HIGH. GOLF DAY! BE BACK B4 DINNER.
LUV U.
TIGRE
OFF INS CAPS

① DAILY BIO-RHYTHM/BIOLOGICAL CLOCK
Based on your birthday, this function acts like a Feng Shui adviser for planning your day: it tells you the highs and lows of your intellectual, emotional and physical faculties on a given day, helping you decide to carry out activities that best fit your bio-rhythm and avoid those that do not. IDEAL FOR BUSINESS PEOPLE AND SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS (golfers and athletes).

② MESSAGE FUNCTION
This very useful function lets you write messages with your remote (just like texting from a cellphone) and make them appear as soon as the TV is turned on. Perfect when you want to inform your better half that you'll be home late, or tell your kids to finish their homework, or remind the helper to do the house chores.

③ CALENDAR
Displays grid by month, day and week.

④ AV/MTS STEREO
Unlike mono TVs, all TCL TVs create 2-channel STEREO sound that's compatible to the source, allowing you to fully enjoy the stereo sound features of your VCD/DVD material (AV) and stereo broadcast (MTS) for big size models.

NO TO MONO

SOURCE	TV	RESULT
VCD/DVD STEREO	MONO TV	MONO SOUND
VCD/DVD STEREO	TCL AV/MTS STEREO	STEREO SOUND

⑤ DIGITAL CURTAIN
When the TV is turned on, the cool blue screen opens up much like the curtains of a movie screen, simulating the cinema experience.

TCL
TCL 21189u
AV STEREO

Retail prices of all TCL FLAT CTVs inclusive of rack accessory.

TCL TVs. MORE AMAZING FEATURES THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE.

RCA in the US, Thomson in Europe, TCL in Asia.

Try to find other brands that offer not only realistic pictures and stereo sound but also truly unique features, and you might just find yourself coming back to a TCL TV.

Surprisingly affordable, all TCL TVs also come with a 2-year parts and service warranty. Discover why people all over the world are starting to call TCL their "new favorite TV". Check out TCL today!

TCL 34181u AV/MTS STEREO CTV
TCL 29189u AV/MTS STEREO CTV
TCL 29E20 AV/MTS STEREO CTV
TCL 25189u AV/MTS STEREO CTV
TCL 21E20 SLIM FLAT AV STEREO CTV

TCL
My New Favourite

Easy kitchen tips

Cleaning rice cookers

Cover your rice cooker bowl with cooking spray before adding the rice and water. The spray will prevent the rice from sticking to the bowl allowing for easier clean up.

Creating counter space

If you have a small kitchen, then you are always looking for places to put things. The next time you make cookies, place the cooling rack directly over your sink. This won't take away any of your precious counter space and you also won't have to worry about clean up...the crumbs fall right in the sink!

Dish soap dispenser

Hide your dish soap in a recycled hand-soap dispenser, so next time you do your dishes all you have to do is pump the desired amount onto your sponge. No need for messy and bulky bottles.

Dust buster for the kitchen

Eliminate clutter and dust by storing your attachments for your electric mixer in the bowl and then covering it with a plastic shower cap. Then when you are ready to use your mixer you won't have to wash it a second time!

J-1

Thanks To Bariatric Surgery, Clayton And Iree Now Have A New Lease On Life.

OBESITY IS BAD NEWS. Morbid Obesity is pretty much a death sentence.

And Clayton was on Death Row. At 383 pounds he had it all: diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, bone and joint disease, reflux, even sleep apnea. His sister Iree wasn't much better, weighing in at an impressive 350 pounds.

Because of his incredible bulk, simple things like crossing the street and self-bathing were impossible. Despite repeated stabs at diet and exercise, nothing was working. Clayton, and Iree, needed help, fast.

The UST Hospital's extensive gastric bypass, or bariatric surgery expertise, was the solution. By shrinking the distal stomach, restricting the gastric reservoir's size and inducing an aversion to sweets coupled with the patient's active cooperation, good results happen.

It worked. Thanks to Clayton's determination, today he is nearly half the man he used to be: 230 pounds, and counting. Iree has lost a whopping hundred pounds, so far. More importantly their lives have changed beyond recognition, happier than words can describe. And safe from serious health risks.

Consult your specialist or call The UST Hospital if you think you need help.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital at Tel. Nos. 732-8188, 731-4545, 731-3001 locals 2345/2455 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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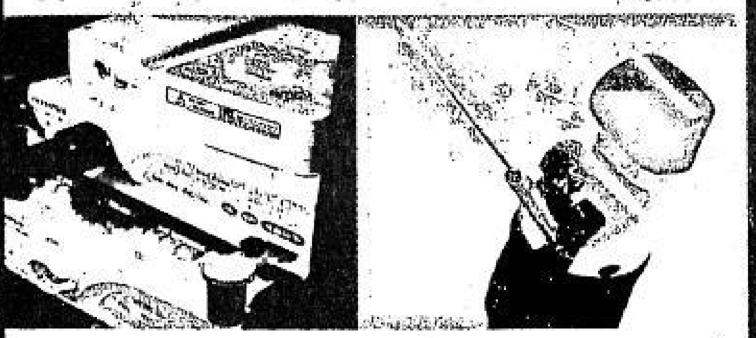

The Country's First and Only Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) with Fine Needle Aspiration (FNA) Technology.

BIG WORDS, YES. But what they represent is a genuine breakthrough in cancer management.

The leading-edge OLYMPUS EU-M Radial Endoscopic Ultrasound, quite simply, allows specialists to probe areas previously inaccessible, making cancer detection a reality.

In addition, it provides the best locoregional staging for GI tract malignancies. Once detected, the state-of-the-art EUS-guided Fine Needle Aspiration with the OLYMPUS Linear EU-C60 allows for instant and effective tumor biopsy.

Consult your doctor on how you can benefit from The UST Hospital's breakthrough EUS and FNA technology.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital's Endoscopy Unit at Tel. Nos. 731-3001 local 2302, 740-3178 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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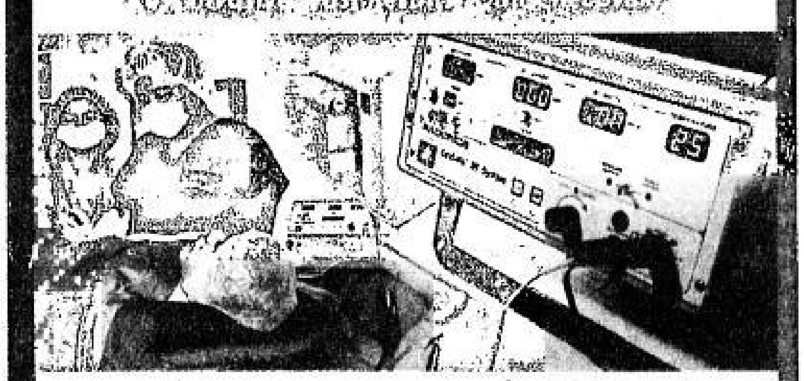

Introducing The Country's First And Only Multi-Organ RFA Center.

RFA IS RADIO FREQUENCY ABLATION, and The University of Santo Tomas Hospital is bringing pioneering multi-organ RFA tumor treatment to the Philippines.

While other hospitals use RFA only for liver cancer treatment, thanks to The UST Hospital's Stanford- and Milan-trained specialist, Dr. Emmanuel Almazan, multi-organ treatment is now possible.

The benefits are substantial, compared to surgery: minimal invasion, near immediate results and rapid recovery.

The UST Hospital RFA Center allows patients to enjoy a better quality of life, by sparing them from the rigours of conventional courses of treatment.

Ask your specialist how you can benefit from the only multi-organ RFA Center in the country, at The UST Hospital.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital's RFA Center at Tel. No. 731-3001 local 2383 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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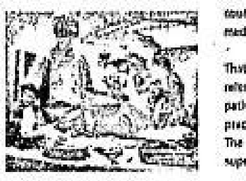
Behind A Great Hospital Are Great Doctors And Nurses.



SINCE 1946, The University of Santo Tomas Hospital has been the training ground and home of some of the country's finest doctors, nurses and medical technicians.

This tradition continues today. With a relentless dedication to total quality patient care through continuous best practices and technology upgrading, The UST Hospital is ready to offer you superb healthcare.

Consult your doctor or contact us today for more information on our diverse range of health services.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital at Tel. No. 731-3001 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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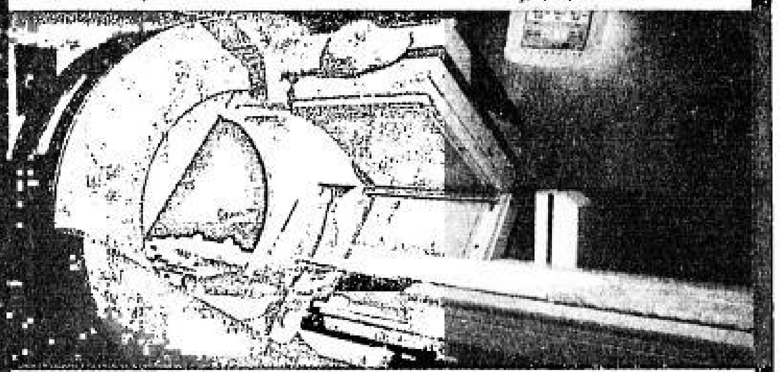
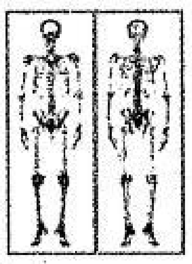
What's Next?



Our New Dual Head Gamma Camera Tells All.



YOU CAN'T FIX WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE.

A frequent problem in making accurate diagnoses before often requiring invasive surgery just to assess the patient's condition.

With the Siemens Dual Head Gamma Camera, the specialists of The UST Hospital can get an exceedingly clear picture of potential problem areas, making invasive procedures even less necessary.

A vital precision instrument used for bone, heart, thyroid and kidney imaging, the Siemens Dual Head Gamma Camera takes front and back images in mere minutes, making faster and more accurate diagnosis possible.

Consult your specialist or call The UST Hospital to find out how the new leading edge Siemens Dual Head Gamma Camera can help you.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital's Nuclear Medicine Section at Tel. No. 731-3001 local 2354 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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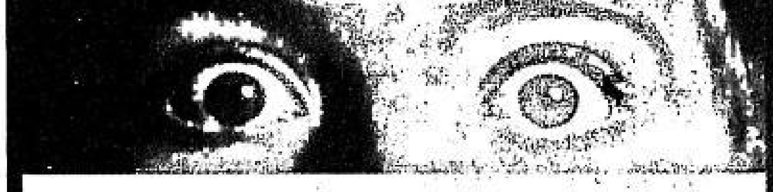

Clearly You Should See Us.

THE UST HOSPITAL EYE CENTER is the home of many firsts in the country:

- The pioneer in Intraocular Lens Implantation;
- The first in One-Port and Three-Port Vitrectomy;
- The first Trabeculectomy and Valve Implant for glaucoma;
- The first Retinal Detachment & RK Refractive Surgery;
- The USTH-invented Scleral Transposition and Transplantation for generally accepted hopeless eye diseases;
- The first in Endoscopic Transnasal DCR, Endoscopic Dacryoplasty, Endoscopic Forehead Lift, Direct Browlift using [illegible]

The UST Hospital Eye Center has the specialists and the facilities to perform everything from routine refraction to treating congenital cataracts. With Bausch & Lomb Millennium microsurgical systems, Humphrey Perimetry machines, the latest FA X-Ray, Argon and Diode lasers, state-of-the-art Carl Zeiss microscopes, Carl Zeiss Medi-pack System, miniature Endoscopes and three dedicated operating rooms, you're in good hands.

Consult your specialist today for a clearer picture.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital at Tel. Nos. 731-3001 locals 2261 & 2617 or 740-2617 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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Only One Is In The Philippines. And That's No Hearsay.

THE UST HOSPITAL HEARING & DIZZINESS CENTER is the country's only center recognized and fully accredited by the International Federation of Otolaryngological Societies (IFOS), International Society of Audiology (ISA) and Hearing International (HI).

Only two centers of its kind exist in the world today.

If that sounds like an earful, what this simply means is The UST Hospital Hearing & Dizziness Center is globally recognized as a center of excellence in treating hearing and balance disorders. For instance, the Center can detect hearing loss as early as 24 hours after birth.

With internationally recognized experts and the latest equipment, The UST Hospital Hearing Center is your clear choice. Consult your specialist today.

The UST Hospital
Total Quality Patient Care

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital at Tel. Nos. 731-3001 locals 2369 & 2478 or 749-9742 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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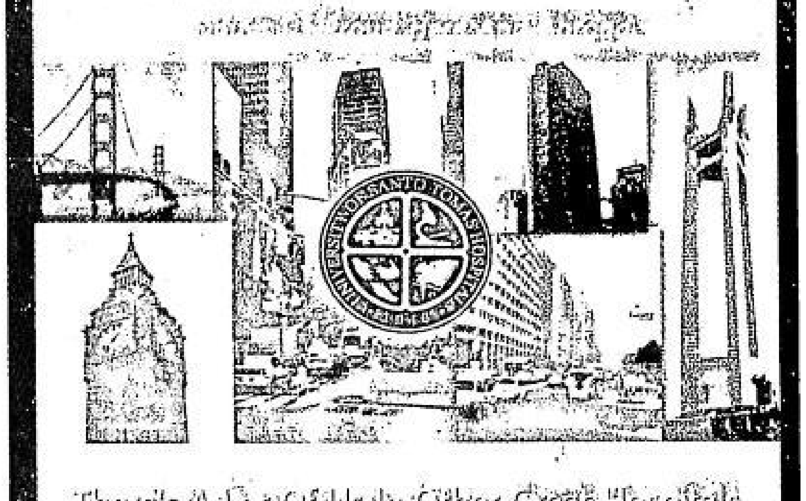

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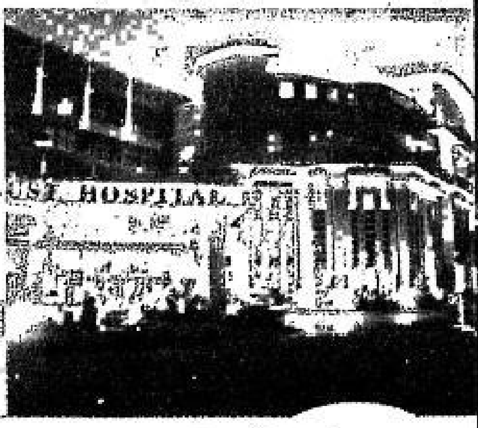

Breaking new ground in the fight against cancer.

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The Benavides Cancer Institute. Breaking new ground in the fight against cancer.

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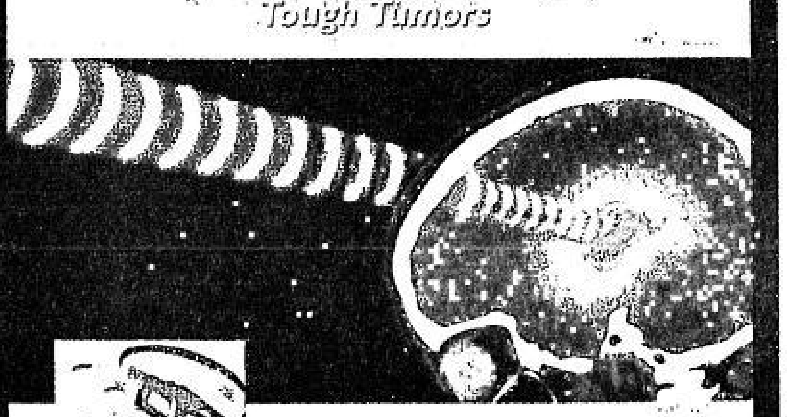
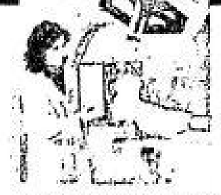


Without Breaking Skin



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And because it's non-invasive, patient discomfort is cut to an absolute minimum.

The Radionics X-Knife RT3 system. Consult the specialists of The UST Hospital to find out how this amazing technology can help you.

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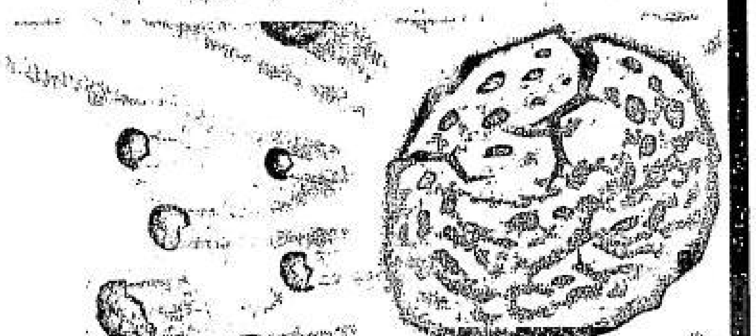

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And at greatly minimized disruption to your lives as well. Thanks to Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy or ESWL, you'll be up and about in no time.

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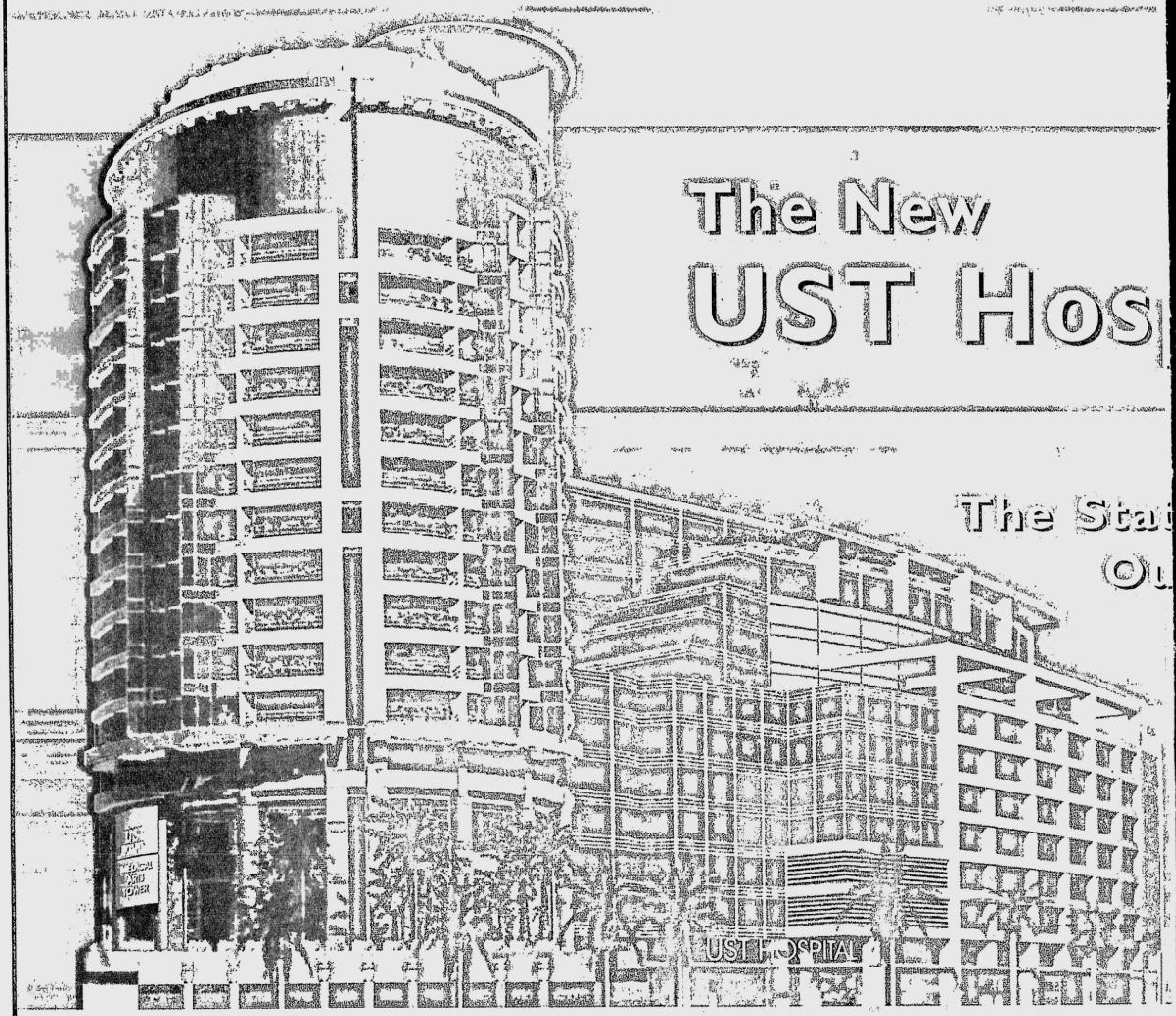

The New

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THE UST HOSPITAL, the country's premiere university-based medical institution, accelerates even faster with the ground-breaking today of the new 17-storey UST Hospital Tower.

Designed to house the hospital's specialists in modern, international-standard clinics, the Tower will also contain the medical tourism wards, the USTH Eye Institute, the Aesthetic and Reconstructive Institute, the Hospital Lounge and USTH Tower Club and a helipad to handle VIP and emergency conditions.

No expense will be spared to ensure The UST Ho
Tower meets all current global standards for top-tier ho
facilities - an international team of experts was assembled f
design and construction.

The UST Hospital Tower is the jewel in the crown c
UST Hospital's remarkable renewal in so short a time. A
yet another example of the institute's dedication to total q
patient care.

For inquiries please contact The UST Hospital at Tel. No. 731-3001 or visit www.usthospital.com.ph

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The UST Hospital Is An ISO 9001:2000 Institution.

MANY THINK THAT THIS IS JUST A BUNCH OF MEANINGLESS LETTERS AND NUMBERS. Or worse, just a cynical marketing exercise.

But they would be seriously mistaken. Because by being an ISO 9001:2000 compliant healthcare institution, this signifies that The UST Hospital delivers a standard of excellence that only a few other hospitals in the country meet.

From medical, diagnostic, treatment, research and support services, to leading-edge medical education, training and clinical research, The UST Hospital fully complies with international standards in healthcare.

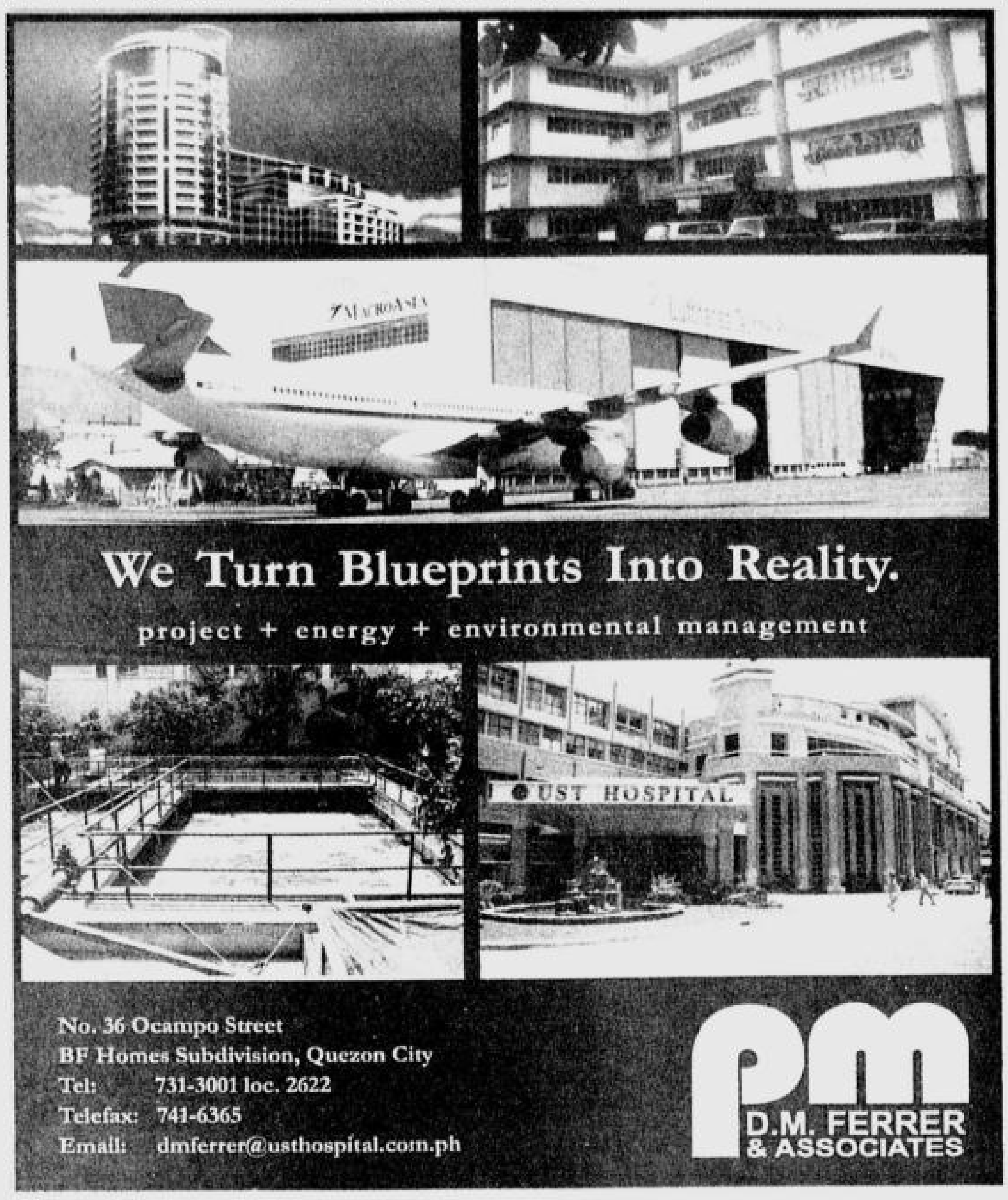
And that's why The UST Hospital's battle cry is Total Quality Patient Care.

ISO International Organization for Standardization

TÜV SÜD ISO 9001

The UST Hospital

Total Quality Patient Care



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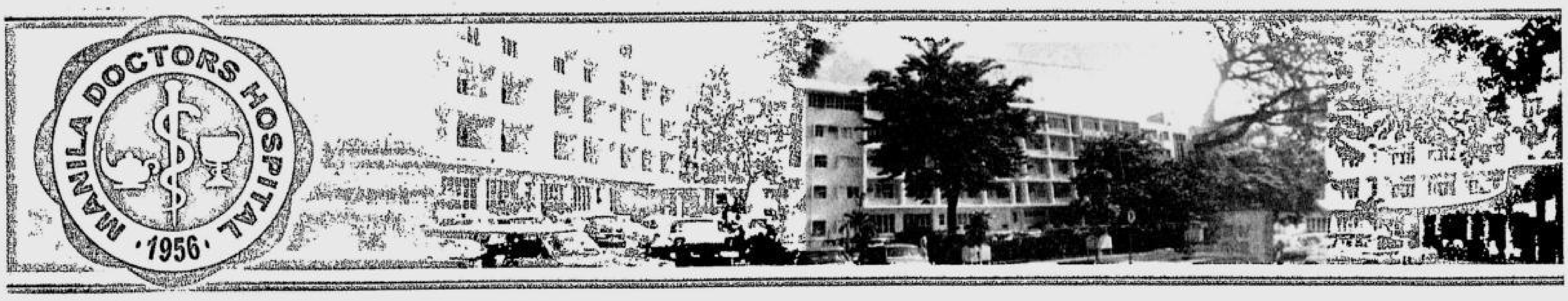
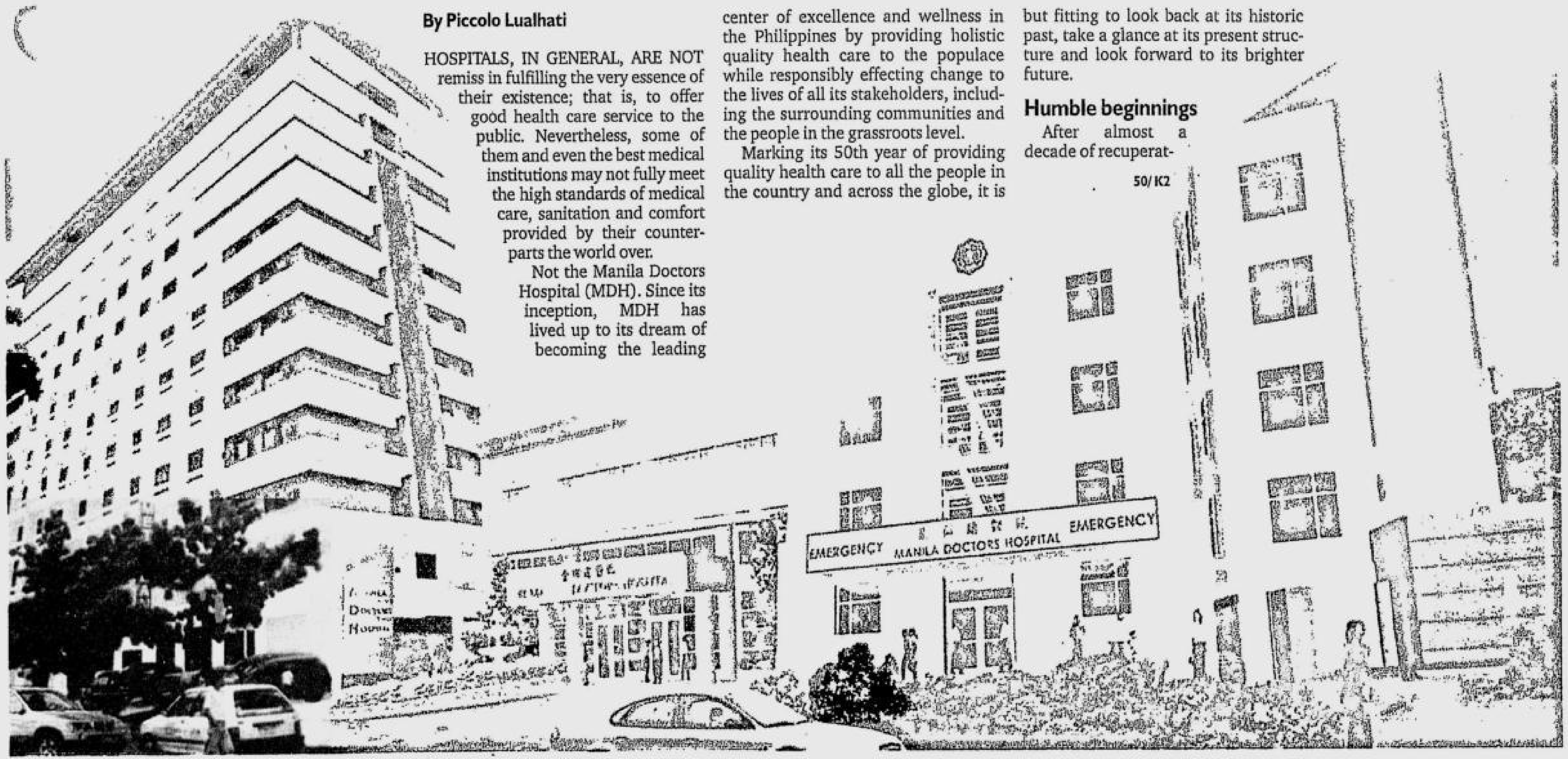


50 *golden years* of providing world-class, quality and innovative health care service



By Piccolo Lualhati

HOSPITALS, IN GENERAL, ARE NOT remiss in fulfilling the very essence of their existence; that is, to offer good health care service to the public. Nevertheless, some of them and even the best medical institutions may not fully meet the high standards of medical care, sanitation and comfort provided by their counterparts the world over.

Not the Manila Doctors Hospital (MDH). Since its inception, MDH has lived up to its dream of becoming the leading center of excellence and wellness in the Philippines by providing holistic quality health care to the populace while responsibly effecting change to the lives of all its stakeholders, including the surrounding communities and the people in the grassroots level.

Marking its 50th year of providing quality health care to all the people in the country and across the globe, it is but fitting to look back at its historic past, take a glance at its present structure and look forward to its brighter future.

Humble beginnings

After almost a decade of recuperat-

50/ K2

METROBANK FOUNDATION

cares for the well being of the Filipinos

Metrobank Foundation congratulates Manila Doctors Hospital in its 50 years of promoting excellent medical services to the community.
The Foundation is a proud partner of the Hospital's commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility,
and its dedication to provide access to quality healthcare services and surgical operations.

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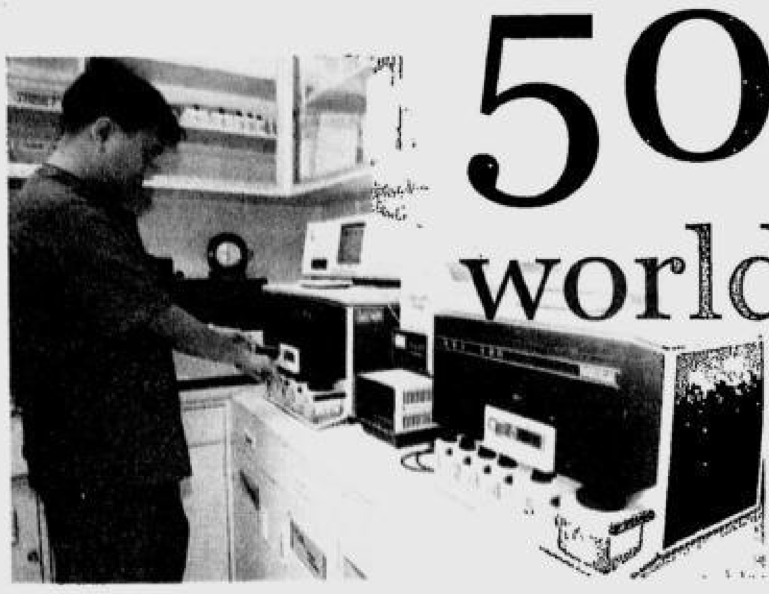
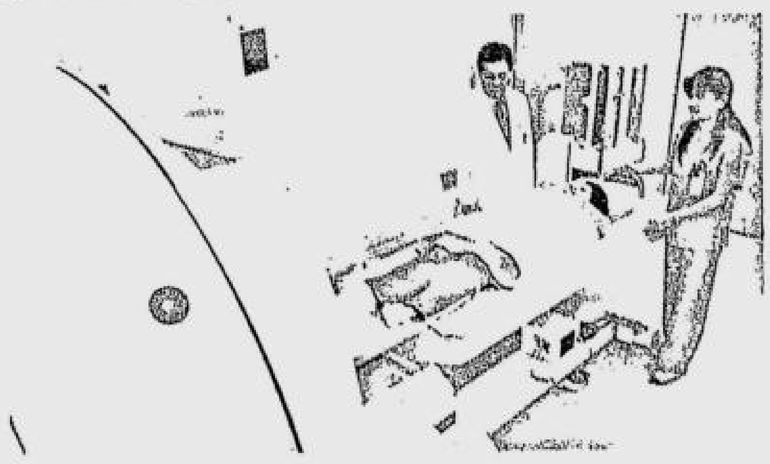




50 golden years of providing world-class, quality . . .

From page K1

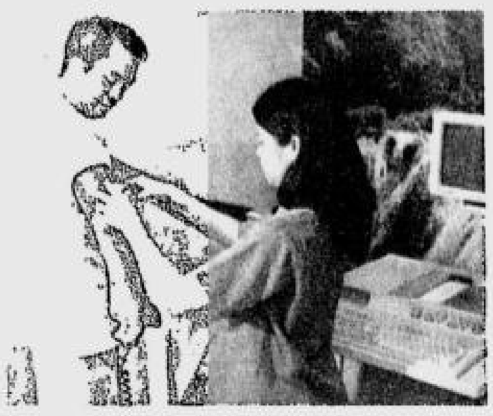
ing from the chaotic Second World War in 1940s, the Philippines slowly regained its vigor and strength with major national reconstruction and redevelopment efforts in the 1950s. Alongside the country's glorious revitalization came the growing need for medical services among the people. Responding to this need, 14 specialist-physicians who just returned from training abroad decided to put up a health facility that would offer the best and the most up-to-date diagnostic and treatment techniques at that time. Pooling their resources to build their dream hospital, the founders opened to the public the Manila Doctors Hospital in 1956. The expertise of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartes was engaged to manage the day-to-day operations of the hospital.

Starting off as a single five-story building along the bustling stretch of the United Nations Avenue in the famous Ermita district of Manila, the tertiary level private hospital catered to the health care demands of the local residents in Metro Manila. After operating for almost two decades, the Metrobank Foundation purchased 51 percent of the Hospital's share of stocks in 1979, thus making it the majority stockholder and owner of MDH. This paved the way for the manifold developments that have occurred in recent years.

Two decades of expansion

The MDH's significant growth from its original five-story structure started when an eight-story Medical Arts Center was inaugurated on Aug. 15, 1984 to house more clinics for the privileged physicians practicing their expertise in the Hospital. Five years later, in July 1989, the 12-story Norberto Ty Medical Tower (NTMT) was erected to accommodate more patient rooms and provide more space for ancillary and other support services.

To keep up with newer medical facilities, major renovations began on Dec. 8, 2003 marked with the inauguration of the Metrobank Foundation Hall at the penthouse of the NTMT. It did not take long for the five-story Ancillary Services Center to open its doors in 2004. This new building is home to the Industrial Medical Services Department, Medical Records, Finance Department, Dormitory and Chapel. Before 2005 ended, the five-story Doña Salustiana Medical Tower was inaugurated on Dec. 8, 2005, accommodating more physicians' and specialty clinics, the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine and other ancillary services and parking spaces as well. Also during this time, the MDH Annex Building was refurbished and now houses the Outpatient Department, Corporate Social Responsibility Department, Cafeteria, and offices of the Security Services, Housekeeping and Linen Services, and Facility Management Department.



At 50

Completing a momentous and glorious five decades of existence, the MDH has truly come a long way and has become more and more vibrant and resilient in fulfilling its thrust of providing holistic quality patient care.

At 50, the Hospital now operates as a 300-bed tertiary private institution with high-rise structures, cutting-edge medical facilities and technologies. A multi-specialty medical center that it is today, MDH is all geared with state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic equipment and modalities. It sports the new and high-end models of CT Scan and laparoscopic equipment as it boasts of its recently acquired Siemens E-cam Dual Head Gamma Camera System.

A home to highly credentialed and committed fellows, diplomates and medical practitioners who are mostly opinion leaders, sought-after lecturers, professors, researchers and awardees here and abroad; as well as competent residents, interns and graduates of the best medical schools, the MDH stands as a "better than the best" health institution that promotes a culture of quality and excellence.

With the fast changing trends in medicine, Manila Doctors Hospital widens its horizon of providing health and wellness care by extending new and specialized service units and clinics. At par with, if not better than, the other medical institutions, it has a high-end Intensive Care Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Hemodialysis Unit, Kidney Stone Center and an Urogynaecology Unit to offer to the public. In augmenting the country's thriving medical tourism industry, on the other hand, it opens to both the local and foreign markets three world-class and avant-garde specialty clinics — the Aesthetic Surgery Center, the Pain and Stress Management Center and the Child Neurosciences Development Center.

All the hospital facilities and services faithfully conform to the universally recognized standards for quality management system as MDH has acquired and maintained in the last two years the ISO 9001:2000 certification — clearly indicating that the MDH truly operates as a world-class hospital.

Amid growing profitably, the Hospital successfully walks the tightrope between being a business entity and a service institution. By adhering to its Corporate Social Responsibilities, MDH ensures that a significant portion of the revenue it earns is plowed back to the community and its people in the form of quality health delivery.

"The Manila Doctors Hospital now opens the most memorable chapter of its existence at a greater height. In its 50 golden years, it has lived on to the very dream of its founders of having a world-class hospital in Manila that cares to the health and wellness needs of the people regardless of their status in life," MDH president Aniceto M. Sobrepena said.

Future directions

Looking forward to what lies ahead — the next 50 years in particular — the Hospital shall continue to beef up its equipment and facilities by keeping them well-maintained and up-to-date and, at the same time, improve its manpower capability through training programs and research. To increase the public health trainings or fora, the Hospital will continue to tap a number of health academicians and lecturers to give awareness lectures to the public. This intervention is aimed to promote overall wellness and healthy living among the public. And of course, the MDH hopes to maintain its ISO certification in the long run.

To become a sought-after institution to be involved with and to partner with, the management plans to do a lot of collaborations with various institutions to expand more of its reach in terms of social services. As far as its partnership with the Metrobank Foundation Inc. (MBFI) is concerned, the Hospital and the Foundation have plans to increase their involvement in community and school health programs by embarking on training community-based and school-based health workers, who shall ensure that the health initiatives of MDH are sustained in the school and in the community.

Living in a borderless world, the MDH sees itself expanding to other areas outside the archipelago by branching out overseas and, eventually, get a big share of the foreign market. For the latter to benefit from the Hospital's competencies and capabilities, three other specialty clinics are already in the pipeline — the PRO-HEALTH (Prevent Obesity, Hypertension, Endocrine Abnormalities and other Lifestyle Threats to Health) Clinic, the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory and the MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) Center. These are all targeted to be launched in the first quarter of 2007 and these will definitely boost the image of MDH and the country as the haven of quality health and wellness services.

"The Manila Doctors Hospital always wants itself to be considered as a highly competitive organization that provides innovative value to the customers. More so, the Hospital wants the latter to find it cost-effective and yet getting the best value for what they paid and rest assured that whatever is concerned of health, whether to keep them well or to cure them on certain disease, MDH is always there to serve them. In so doing, the Hospital is gearing up to realize all its plans and future directions, which it deems achievable in the next 50 years or even earlier than that," Sobrepena said.

With its visionary leadership and pool of competent medical and support staff and, of course, excellent health care service coupled by top-of-the-line equipment and technologies, MDH truly has become one of the top five hospitals in Metro Manila, thus making it the haven of world-class, quality and innovative health care service.

'The Manila Doctors Hospital always wants itself to be considered as a highly competitive organization that provides innovative value to the customers'

MDH hosts highly competent medical practitioners

Massive exodus of 'Pinoy' nurses abroad not a threat

As medical science advances, so does the interdisciplinary professions it covers. Hence, the Manila Doctors Hospital (MDH) continues to improve the profile of its precious resources — the more than 300 active and 600 courtesy members of its medical and dental practitioners who are mostly affiliated with the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH) and similar academic institutions in the country.

"One very interesting fact about MDH is that it has very high standards in the selection of our medical professionals, thus making it as the convergence and the hub of the best doctors in the country. All our doctors here are highly credentialed. They are diplomates or specialists in sub-specialties," said lawyer Pilar Nenuca P. Almira, the Hospital director.

The competencies of the doctors earns the peoples' high regard of the Hospital as the haven of health professionals who render customer-driven quality service that always leads to customer satisfaction and patronage. "The feedback that we always get from the public is that we provide a very strong and holistic medical care and treatment because of our doctors who are highly competent," Almira noted. "This, in turn, enables us to enjoy loyalty and trust from among our patrons."

On the other hand, the health professionals themselves say that MDH is an ideal workplace for them to practice and enhance more of their craft and expertise.

In his attribution to the doctors' comments, Dr. Rex M. Mendoza, MDH administrative director, said, "The hospital tries its very best in providing the medical practitioners the proper environment for them to have a good practice of their profession. The MDH is well-equipped with top-of-the-line technologies. Our laboratories and other diagnostic centers can do almost all the tests the physicians need to evaluate their patients. This only shows how the administration of the Hospital prioritizes the needs of its medical practitioners and their patients."

In terms of working environment, Mendoza described the organization as "very caring and homey. There is a lot of respect that is prevailing among us. The Hospital is a very professional organization that is highly harmonious in terms of our relationships. The environment encourages open discussions and communication so that more ideas are generated on how to approach situations."

Reputed as a good training ground for residents and fellows alike, MDH boasts of its 10 accredited medical specialty residency and fellowship programs, namely: residencies in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, General Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Family and Community Medicine, Ophthalmology, Otorhinolaryngology, and Radiology, and fellowships in Pulmonology and Gastroenterology.

The Hospital is also accredited by the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges (APMC) to accept and train 40 interns annually. Moreover, in-house nurses as well as managers and supervisors are given opportunities to ad- [illegible] skills on nursing and customer care, respectively.

"The Hospital puts a lot of emphasis on these trainings because we want to become so instrumental in the professional growth and development of our people," Almira said.

A proactive institution that is always geared to any future uncertainty, especially issues of national concern, MDH is fortunate enough to remain unperturbed by the massive exodus of Filipino nurses abroad.

Amid the loss of an average of 12 nurses per month or three nurses a week to employment abroad, MDH is able to cope with the situation because of the backing of its academic affiliate Manila Doctors College (MDC) whose graduates are assured of employment at the Manila Doctors Hospital.

"Despite the alarming increase in the numbers of Filipino nurses working abroad primarily due to economic considerations, we are glad to say that we do not run out of nurses because we have MDC backing us. The immediate employment of highly competent nurses and other health-related graduates of MDC help us to fill the void left by the migrating health workers," Mendoza said.

MDH opens world-class avant-garde specialty clinics

New services targeted to boost RP's 'medical tourism' image

THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN growing as a tourist destination, not only as a top choice among vacationing families, but for health and beauty conscious foreign visitors as well. This is primarily due to its world-class Filipino physicians, modern technology and the Filipinos' unique way of caring and compassion unmatched worldwide. Moreover, health and wellness services provided in the Philippines are at a fraction of the cost compared to developing countries.

In order to help promote the country as an ideal hub for the health and wellness needs of the people and, at the same time, keep abreast with the ever-evolving global trends in the medical arena, the Manila Doctors Hospital (MDH) added three new feathers to its cap. MDH recently inaugurated its avant-garde specialty clinics — the Aesthetic Surgery Center, the Pain and Stress Management Center and the Child Neurosciences Development Center.

"The last quarter of 2006 is an exciting year ender for the Hospital because three new specialty clinics were formally opened. The field centers on aesthetic surgery, pain and stress management and child neurology were established in response to the changing global trends in the medical arena and, at the same time, to help promote medical tourism in the Philippines," MDH president Aniceto M. Sobrepena said.

"The new facilities offer top-of-the-line services, technologies and procedures to meet the health and wellness needs of the customers," he added.

The Aesthetic Surgery Center

The MDH Aesthetic Surgery Center was built in response to the current trend in the global market that shows that reconstructive surgery is an expectation of patients.

Dr. Florencio Q. Lucero

"We are opening the top-of-the-line services, systems and procedures of the center for the Hospital to go with the growing aesthetic surgery demands of the global market as well as to fully help in the government's medical tourism thrust to welcome visitors all over the world to go to the Philippines for their health and welness needs," stated Dr. Florencio Q. Lucero, whose appointment as the head of the Center reunites him anew with the MDH after having been working in another hospital for the last 10 years.

A high-end aesthetic center, the MDH Aesthetic Surgery Center provides restorative solutions in health, beauty, and wellness needs of the patients. It likewise gives them access to quality support services and products to become more functional in society.

Nestled at the ground floor of the Hospital's Dona Salustiana Medical Tower, the Center houses one operating room for minor surgical procedures and two consultation rooms. The various reconstructive services — either surgical or therapeutic — to be availed inside the Center include burns and scars, pathological changes of the connective tissues, fibrosis or scar modulation, trauma reconstructive surgery, congenital defect surgery, umbilical abdominoplasty and skin grafting. The wellness component includes facial enhancement (eyelids and eyebag, eyelid folds, noselift, nose trimming, nose reduction) and facial rejuvenation (surgical, minimally invasive and non-surgical). Complicated surgical procedures, on the other hand, such as breast augmentation, breast implant and liposuction are done in the major operating rooms located in the main building.

Unlike its contemporaries, MDH Aesthetic Surgery Center is hospital-based, which according to Dr. Lucero, "is its edge over the other facilities of its kind because it has the full-complement of other specialties, instrumentations as well as diagnostic and support equipment that are a requirement in the event of any eventuality that may arise during the operation."

Among the advanced and high-quality technologies the Hospital's beauty and wellness center is equipped with, are the anesthesia machines, monitoring and resuscitation devices — all indicating that the Center is at par with modern aesthetic facilities abroad.

Mindful of the fact that any surgical procedure is always at risk of bleeding, infection, loss of tissue, adverse reaction to medicines administered and other complications, the Center ensures that sterility, wound infection and other precautionary measures are of global standard.

The Pain and Stress Management Center

The Pain and Stress Management Center is a multidisciplinary facility that provides comprehensive and integrated approaches to both assessment and treatment of all kinds of pains.

"It has been known that patients with chronic pain do not like to transfer from one center to another. Hence, the establishment of a 'one-stop shop' like this is some sort of a relief for them," stressed Dr. Ma. Lourdes Josefina Koh Cabaluna, resident anesthesiologist and section chief of the Center.

Dr. Ma. Lourdes Josefina Koh Cabaluna

Designed as a multidisciplinary array of diagnostic and treatment facility, the Center is manned not only by pain doctors or anesthesiologists themselves, but also by other medical pain practitioners such as neurologists, oncologists, orthopedists, physiatrists and psychiatrists; as well as non-physician specialists including nurses, physician assistants, physical or rehabilitation therapists and psychologists — all working together as a team that evaluates, manages and treats patients' conditions.

Also situated at the ground floor of the Hospital's Dona Salustiana Medical Tower, the Center houses two spacious functional rooms for consultation, medication and treatment purposes; a reception area, where pain patients can enjoy and learn from an audio-visual presentation on cancer issues, wellness guides, pain control and nutrition while waiting for their turn to meet or consult the clinicians; and a library for information and research purposes.

Although pain can be managed by patients themselves at home, cutting-edge medical technologies are available inside the Center for their perusal. These include patient-controlled anesthesia pumps, a lock out interval device and the ultra-modern dedicated pain nurse machine, among others.

For pain patients' treatment, the Zen-like special clinic utilizes preventive approaches that are of psycho-behavioral and interventional pain; wellness medications like therapies for relaxing, restoring, healing and whole-body well-being; as well as supportive care.

"All the methods of treatment administered by the clinic eventually replace the need for taking any pain medicine, or less of it, over time. They help relieve pain, lessen muscle spasms, reduce stress and promote well-being of pain patients," Dr. Cabaluna said.

The Child Neurosciences Development Center

In aid of the country's young populace with a wide range of neurologic, neurosurgical and neurodevelopmental illnesses, the Child Neurosciences Development Center is also a multi-field clinic like the latter clinic that caters treatment, prevention or modification of inherited and familial disorders.

MDH/ K4

Dr. Aida Salonga

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A humble sari-sari store owner saw his business in a broader perspective. Seeing wealth in everyday things, Mr. Chan Man Bun and his wife pioneered the concept of the supermarket in the country.

"One of our partners saw a grocery in the U.S., liked it, and decided to apply it locally thus we put up Cherry Foodarama at Shaw Boulevard."

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"There are clients/families who, up to the 4th generation, do their grocery at Cherry. We kept the feel of a family grocery. Nakasanayan na kami."

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Owners, Cherry Foodarama
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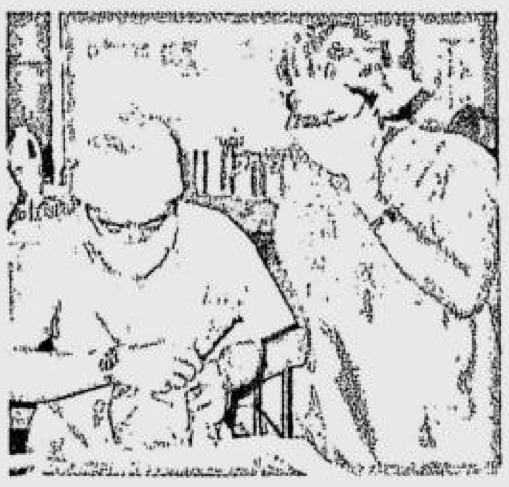
The profile of a responsible corporate citizen



> The four major programs of the Hospital's CSR thrust include: Hospital Services, Community Services, Medical-Surgical Missions and Special projects

APART FROM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, a corporate or business entity ought to be sensitive also to the needs of all its stakeholders, including the needs of its surrounding communities and the people in them. In this aspect, the Manila Doctors Hospital - with its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs - has been in the forefront of creating positive social impact by contributing to the welfare of the community at large.

From the experience in health-related outreach programs it conducted in different communities all over the country in the 1980's and from to the establishment of the Hospital's Social Service Unit in the 1990's, MDH stirred a more meaningful and tangible impact upon the lives of the poor families in a larger sector of the community with the creation of the Corporate Social Responsibility Department (CSRD) in 2005.

"Since the inception of CSRD, an inherent organization whose function is to provide medical social service and support the implementation of the four major programs it espouses, MDH has created impact and touched many lives by providing social services to underserved communities and giving hope to their underprivileged populace, whose basic right for access to health care services are, more often than not, neglected by society," MDH president Aniceto M. Sobrepena said.

The four major programs of the Hospital's CSR thrust include: Hospital Services, Community Services, Medical-Surgical Missions and Special projects.

"The MDH is the only health institution with these concrete CSR programs. This only means that the Hospital's responsibility in providing quality health care services is not confined only to its clients within its premises, but also the community and its people at large," stressed Atty. Pilar Nenuca P. Almira, MDH hospital director.

Under the Hospital Services program, MDH provides free professional services and significantly discounted in-patient medical services to deserving indigent patients needing diagnosis and treatment in the following specialties - Internal Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecilogy, ENT, Ophthalmology, and Family Medicine. The hospital's Social Workers give counseling services and process referral to other non-government organizations and government organizations. The MDH, thorough its Department of ENT, has partnered with the Philippine Band of Mercy in the repair of cleft lip and palate among affected children.

To implement a strategic health program that would benefit society, MDH has adopted a community - Barangay 178 in Maricaban, Pasay City - for which the hospital, through the Department of Family Medicine, takes care of the health needs of the community. Through lectures and demonstrations, the community residents are trained on health-related programs. The barangay health workers are also given knowledge and skills to take care of the emergent health needs of the populace and also to ensure the project's sustainability.

Through the Department of Pediatrics, on the other hand, the Hospital pioneered in the promotion of a school health by adopting a public school, the Justo Lukban Elementary School in Paco, Manila, where it implements a comprehensive school health program to address the health concerns of schoolchildren, the teachers, and the pupils' parents. This program is in cooperation with the City of Manila Health Office and the City Schools Division.

"The community services, which promote health care to the adopted community and school are very successful with encouraging results. They have already lived up to their very purpose of bridging the gap of the absences of doctors and nurses in the community as well as the school and, at the same time, help them become more self-reliant and self-sufficient in the long run," stated Dr. Cynthia C. Juico, currently chairman of the Community Services Committee of the CSRD.

Guided by the belief that health is one of the basic rights and needs of everybody, the Hospital ensures that health services are made available not only to its paying customers, but also to unfortunate but deserving individuals in order for them to continue enjoying a full and productive life. Hence, the third component of its CSR programs is dedicated to medical and surgical missions within and outside the Hospital.

Outside its premises, the medical institution has been invited to extend its noble services to areas across the Philippines, especially in far-flung areas that need the services most. Last year, the Hospital Medical and Surgical Mission team went to the provinces of Surigao and South Cotabato in Mindanao.

The in-house surgical missions component of the MDH Corporate Social Responsibility Program started in 2001 and offers various operations, namely: "Share the Gift of Vision" for cataract patients; Thyroidectomy operation for patients with goiter; and Gynecological Operation for women.

This year, 37 patients whose eyesight were affected by cataract were treated under the Share the Gift of Vision conducted by the Department of Opthalmology last October 22. It is reported that most of the patients have recovered their eyesight.

"We are very happy with the 100 percent success rate of our cataract mission this year. Right after the operations, most of the patients reported to have regained their eyesight with 20/20 vision," delighted Dr. Jhanssen Castillo, ophthalmology resident of MDH who participated in the mission.

Coinciding with the cataract mission was the first leg of the Gynecological Operation headed by the Department of OB/Gyne which, all throughout its three days of operations on October 22, 29 and November 5, has operated on 20 patients with myoma and other reproductive organ-related illnesses.

"The mission was very successful. So far, no complications have been reported to us by the patients after a week or two when they came back here for follow-up check-ups," stressed Dr. Mildred Barredo Ilarto, an obstetrician gynecologist resident of the Hospital who joined the mission.

Sharing the positive outcomes of both the above-mentioned missions, the Thyroid Operation was also a success. A total of 17 patients with varying sizes and pathology of thyroid masses were operated last October 8 and 15.

"Like both the cataract and gynecological missions, the recent thyroid surgical mission concluded with very encouraging results. Most of the patients recovered and are being followed up closely," Dr. Arlene T. Fajardo, chief resident of the department of surgery, said.

As a corporate social citizen, the Hospital needs to be active in the CSR, not only through its medical activities but also as a partner in other endeavors as well. In this aspect, MDH has embarked on special projects like recyclables and waste management as well as employee volunteerism. The former initiative raises funds through recycling wastes in the Hospital. The raked proceeds fund units of houses for the Gawad Kalinga project of the Metrobank Foundation Incorporated (MBFI); while the latter encourages employees of the Hospital to volunteer their services to various causes.

"With these projects, MDH contributes well to the various social initiatives of other organizations," said Salve Macedonio, a resident social worker to MDH.

An allied partner

The Metrobank Foundation was established in 1979 as the corporate social responsibility arm of the Metrobank and became the majority shareholder of the Manila Doctors Hospital. Since then, it has become MDH's partner in ensuring the hospital's evolution into one of the premiere medical institutions in the country, especially when it comes to its CSR initiatives.

In recent years, the continuing development and modernization of the Hospital has been accorded high priority in the overall agenda of the Foundation. With the latter's assistance, the establishment of additional facilities and setting up of new departments and services were made possible; and, so with its social service programs.

"As the corporate social responsibility arm of Metrobank, we support not only the physical expansion of MDH, but also its causes to help indigent patients, provide medical outreach programs to depressed communities and conduct medical and surgical missions to undeserved areas of the country," said MBFI chairman George S.K. Ty. "With these, the Foundation, through the Hospital, ensures health services are made available to the general public in order for them to continue enjoying a full and productive life."

Since 1998, the Foundation has been providing a P6 million grant annually to the Hospital to run the different CSR programs which provide medical assistance to indigent patients who seek care from the MDH. The grant enables the Hospital to conduct regular surgical missions within and outside its premises.

"We are proud to report that during these missions, the Hospital's consultants, who are also considered as some of the country's best doctors, are the ones doing the operation. Surgical procedures that may reach as high as P40,000 are now provided for free to the indigent patients in these missions," the MBFI chair said.

To further help the social services of MDH, he added, "The Foundation pledges to increase the allocation for financial support to indigent patients by P1 million per month. We hope to reach the revenue that would allow us to do this in two-three years."

Sweetest words from 'changed' lives

TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WORKING behind the fulfillment of the Manila Doctors Hospital's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, having such activities realized is fulfilling enough. However, when you hear genuine words of gratitude expressed by someone whose life you have touched, they are the sweetest words one could hear.

Valenzuela resident Carmelito Reyes Jr., 48 years old, was a recipient of the Gift of Vision Program last October. He had "Maraming salamat po. Nakakakita na po ako uli. Napakalaking bagay nito para sa akin at sa pamilya ko. Makakabalik na ulit ako sa trabaho. Salamat at may MDH at Metrobank Foundation na tumutulong sa tulad namin." (Thank you very much. I can see again. This means a great deal for me and my family. I can now go back to work. I am thankful to MDH and Metrobank Foundation for helping people like us.)

For 42-year-old Josephine P. San Pedro of Pasay City, who was diagnosed with myoma, MDH has set a good example of what a private health institution ought to be. Her myoma was removed during the OB Surgical Mission last month. "Buti na lang meron pa ring ospital na tulad ng MDH na hindi lang panay pagkita ng pera ang habol. Tinitingnan din nila kung papano sila makakatulong." (It is good there are still hospitals like MDH who are not only after making profit. They also look for ways to help.)

Thyroidectomy surgical mission beneficiary Juanito Cua, 52 years old from Tondo, Manila, has, for his part, to say, "Ang laking tulong ng ginagawang ito ng MDH. Hindi lang financial kundi binibigyan din nila ng pagasa ang mga pasyente at binabalik ang kumpyansa sa sarili na nawawala kapag nagkakaroon ka ng sakit." (MDH helps a lot. The help is not only in financial terms but they also give hope and brings back the self-confidence of the patients, who are usually demoralized by their illnesses.)

The sweetest words.....

MDH cited as the first and only ISO certified hospital in Manila

WHILE ADHERING TO ONE OF ITS MISSIONS THAT IS TO operate a world-class hospital, the MDH adds a new record to its collection of sterling accolades -- the first and only hospital in Manila to be accorded ISO 9001:2000 certification.

"We are very happy for being the first and only ISO certified hospital in Manila. Practically all hospitals - both private and state-owned - are working hard to get a certification of quality care like this. This is one of the remarkable feats that the MDH has ever accomplished since its establishment and it is in perfect timing with our 50th founding anniversary this December," said MDH president Aniceto M. Sobrepeña. "For us to become ISO certified means we have a quality management system that is of international standard in place."

In 2001, the Hospital's ISO Project was already in place. It was put in the backburner, however, because of the plan to transfer the MDH to Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in Pasay City. In 2003, the hospital administration decided to shelve the transfer plan and stay a while longer at its present site along UN Avenue. To restart the stalled project, the whole year of 2004 was spent to familiarize the hospital staff with the ISO standards. Moreover, a Documentation Team was created to spearhead the daunting task of fulfilling all the ISO documentation requirements. By January 2005, the hospital was ready to go all-out to bet ISO-certified. The certification audit was carried out by the Anglo Japanese American (AJA) Registrar's, Inc. on November 14, 2005. By faithfully adhering to the core procedures and criteria set to achieve the certification, the MDH finally passed with flying colors the audit and got the ISO certification.

"The ISO 9001:2000 certification was achieved with the full support of and mandate from the top management, a steering team actively orchestrating and closely supervising the ISO-related activities, and a hospital-wide cooperative and collaborative effort and support coupled with impetus provided by the committed and dedicated members of the Documentation Team and later sustained by another core of committed and dedicated internal quality auditors," stated Dr. Reynaldo Joson, MDH head of Corporate Planning Office.

The official recognition has earned for the medical institution the prestige of being the pioneer and only ISO certified hospital in Manila. Other visible and important contributions ISO certification has brought to the MDH are the establishment of a more structured quality management system; the building of a teamwork spirit among the staff; improvement in documentation of policies and procedures; improved outcomes in the business programs; greater potential for future business development and expansion; and of course, attracting patients and clients, both locally and internationally, especially in the light of its medical tourism thrust.

The ISO certification is good for three years. Like other ISO certified hospitals, the MDH has been subjected to a series of surveillance audits to assess whether it has maintained and observed the quality management system set by the standardization body. For this year alone, the Hospital has passed with flying colors the two surveillance audits conducted by AJA Registrars last May and November. This means that Manila Doctors Hospital maintains its status of being ISO-certified.

Looking forward to next year's inspection, Dr. Joson, who is also a surgeon by profession, said, "I'm optimistic that Manila Doctors Hospital will pass the surveillance. This is because even before the external auditors come, we carry out an internal audit of our system and correct any deficiency or deviation right away."

Apart from ISO certification, MDH continues to be accredited by the Department of Health and PhilHealth.

MDH opens world-class avant-garde specialty clinics

From page K3

"Neurologic and neurodevelopmental ailments are a complex disorder that have become prevalent among Filipino children in recent years, according to clinical studies. Similar to the Hospital's pain clinic, the Center is the first of its kind in the private setting in Manila that adopts the multidiciplinary approach in the care of children diagnosed with developmental defects," said Dr. Aida Salonga, child neurologist and head of the MDH child neurology clinic.

A "dream come true" for the institution as a whole, the Center brings together all the disciplines involved in the overall treatment of neurologic and neurodevelopmental-impaired children under one roof. According to the person in charge of the specialty clinic, "The Center aims to provide patients and their families quality service at their convenience."

Comprising the pool of its medical experts are child neurologists, developmental and neurodevelopmental pediatricians, neurosurgeons, neonatologists, geneticists, child psychiatrists and child psychologists; as well as affiliate sub-specialty like neuro-rehab specialists. They are tasked to provide the patients with the Center's wide array of superior services including neurological diagnosis and management, neurodevelopmental assessment and intervention, neuropsychological tests and behavioral intervention, genetic consult, diagnosis, tests, management and counseling, high risk baby follow-up and intervention, newborn screening for out-patients.

Located at the ground floor of the Hospital's building where both the aesthetic and pain clinic also abound, the multidisciplinary center houses three specialty clinics, where patients can avail more extensive evaluation and management services. Modernized equipment and facilities inside the center are enabled to do laboratory and diagnostic tests as well as neuro-imaging and other neuropsychological exams efficiently.

It is noted that all the facilities and amenities as well as treatments offered in the three specialty clinics adhere well to the Hospital's ISO certification and are priced affordable for the public to enjoy.

Marking the Hospital's five decades of providing quality health care service to the people, Sobrepena said that, "These Centers are very significant additional world-class facilities of MDH since one of its missions is to take care of everybody's health needs. Hence, these new facilities are really a welcome development for the Hospital in its turning 50 this month."

WILL Smith was the proud subject of a tribute at the Museum of the Moving Image in New York on Dec. 3. He brought wife Jada and son Jaden along. REUTERS

RTAINMENT

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Taxes may be killing RP movies

Stakeholders agree that the industry's survival is at stake

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"IT'S A MATTER OF SURVIVAL."

This is the common sentiment expressed by different industry stakeholders reacting to observations made by Rolando Atienza, head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), in an INQUIRER Entertainment story dated Nov. 28.

Atienza said that decreasing or abolishing amusement taxes was bad news for the government's rewards program for quality movies, as implemented by the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB).

Several industry leaders disagree with Atienza and insist that amusement taxes have long been one of the reasons behind the decline of local cinema.

"Let us help the movie industry survive first. All producers, not just a few, should have a fighting chance," says Leo Martinez, director general of the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP).

The FAP has a share in the Metro Manila Film Festival Fund, which comes from the amusement taxes collected during the annual two-week event.

TAXES/ L2

Nicholson credits 'sexual vitality' for his staying power

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—"WHEN WE GOT OFF THE plane in Manila, they drove us by bus out to the jungle, gave us shovels, and said, 'Dig a hole.' So we dug a hole. And then they said, 'And that's where you are going to be living for the next two weeks.' "

Thus recalled actor **Forest Whitaker** about the boot camp he and his fellow actors went through before filming director **Oliver Stone**'s "Platoon" in the Philippines. On the 20th anniversary of the acclaimed Vietnam war epic, Premiere magazine gathered Forest, **Willem Dafoe, Tom Berenger, Keith David, Kevin Dillon,** Oliver himself and others to reminisce. It's an interesting read.

Tribute for Will Smith

Will Smith was given a Museum of the Moving Image tribute at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York on Dec. 3. Of course, his very special guests were his wife, Jada Pinkett Smith, and their son Jaden. Among those who turned up for the salute were Queen Latifah, Thandie Newton, Eva Mendes, Randy Quaid and Terrence Howard. More about this in our next column. Meanwhile, congratulations.

Jack's formula

"Sexual vitality is one of the reasons that I'm lively."

That was **Jack Nicholson**, turning 70 next year, sharing the formula for his *joie de vivre* and longevity. Wearing his trademark dark glasses and that grin (or smirk, depending on how you look at it), Jack was in a mood to talk one recent afternoon in LA. "My answers are very long," he admitted. "I've been up in my house alone for a while so I'm a bit talkative."

"A bit talkative" was an understatement. The winner of three Oscars and five Golden Globes gave such a long answer to my question on turning 70 that I was afraid his reply would take up the whole time allotted to the press con. "I'm never finished," he quipped to one reporter who had asked if he was done replying to her question.

After replying lengthily to another question, he admitted, to much laughter, "I don't even [remember] what the question was." He was very animated. He could have gabbed on and on and no one would mind. After all, how

JACK/ L4

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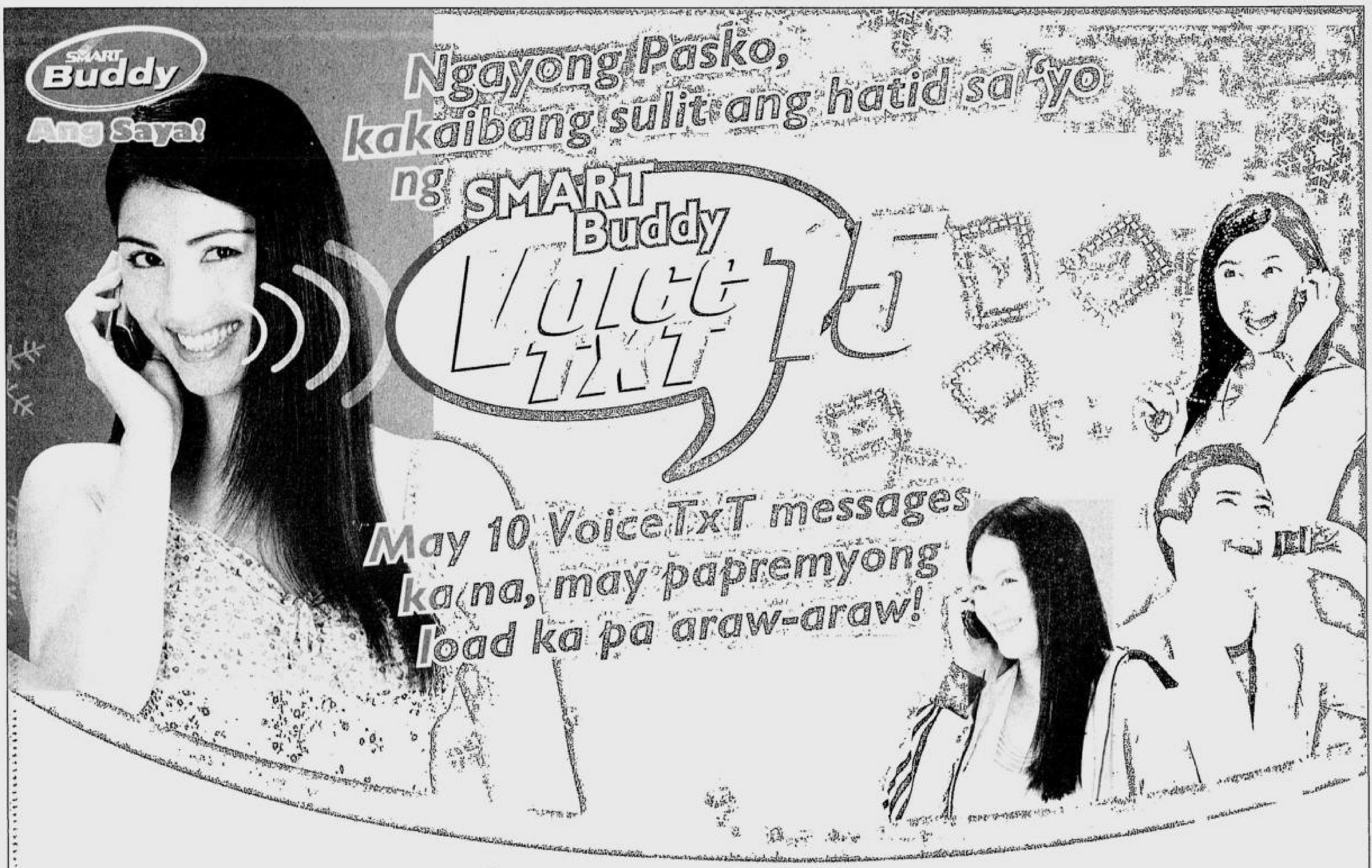

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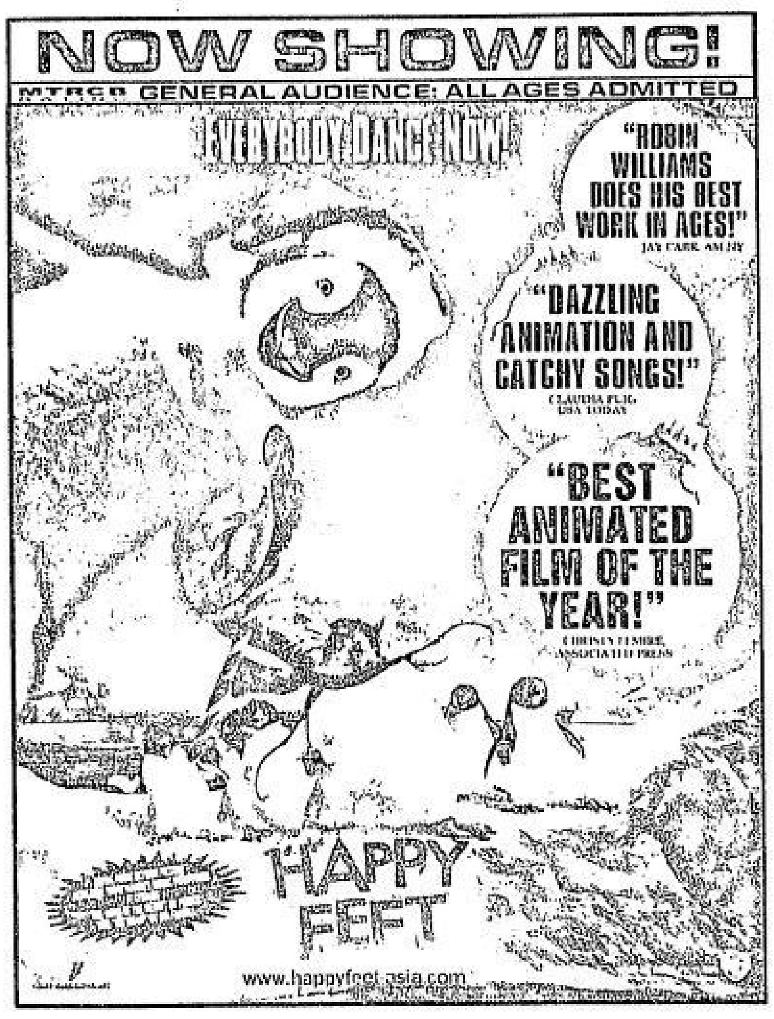
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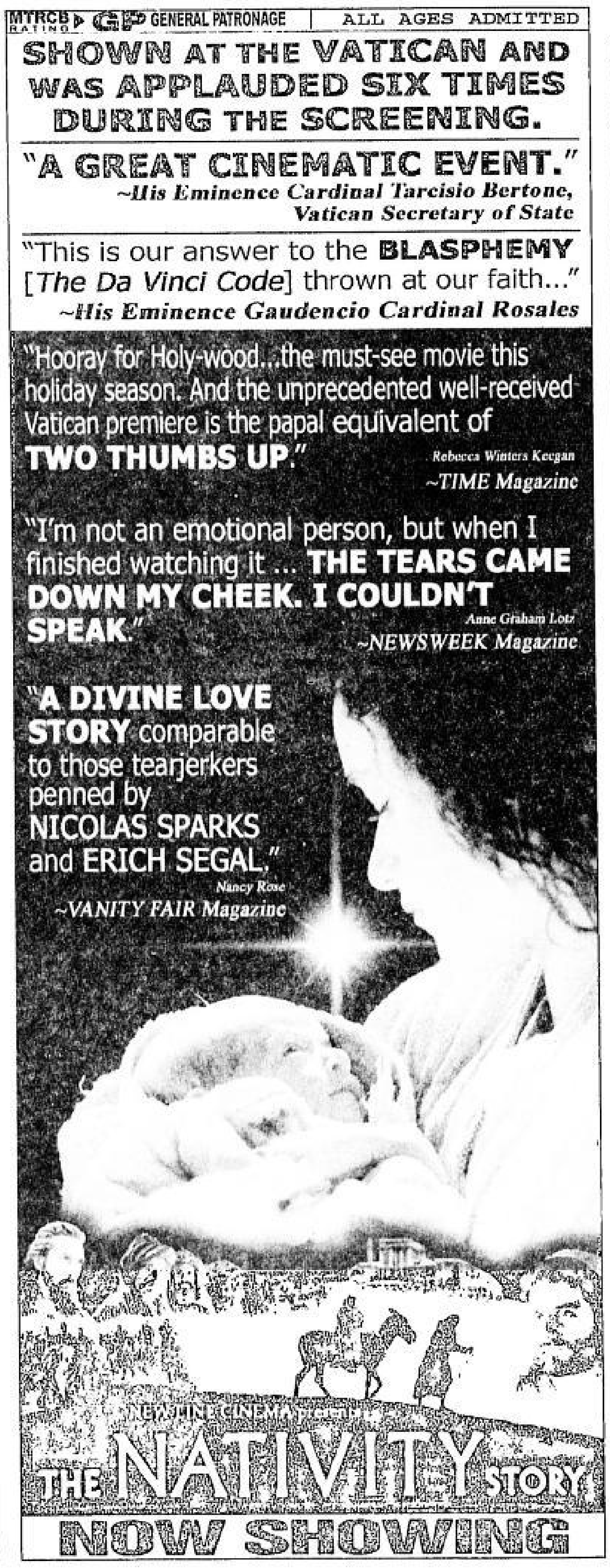
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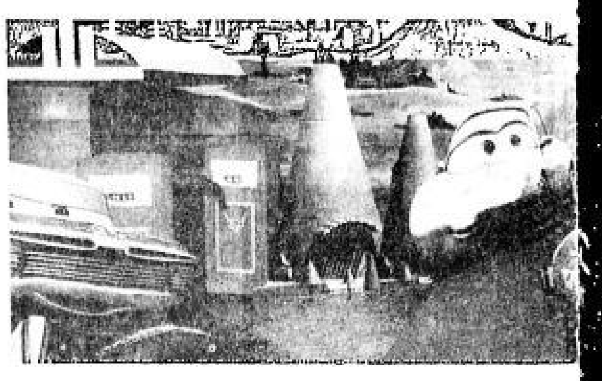

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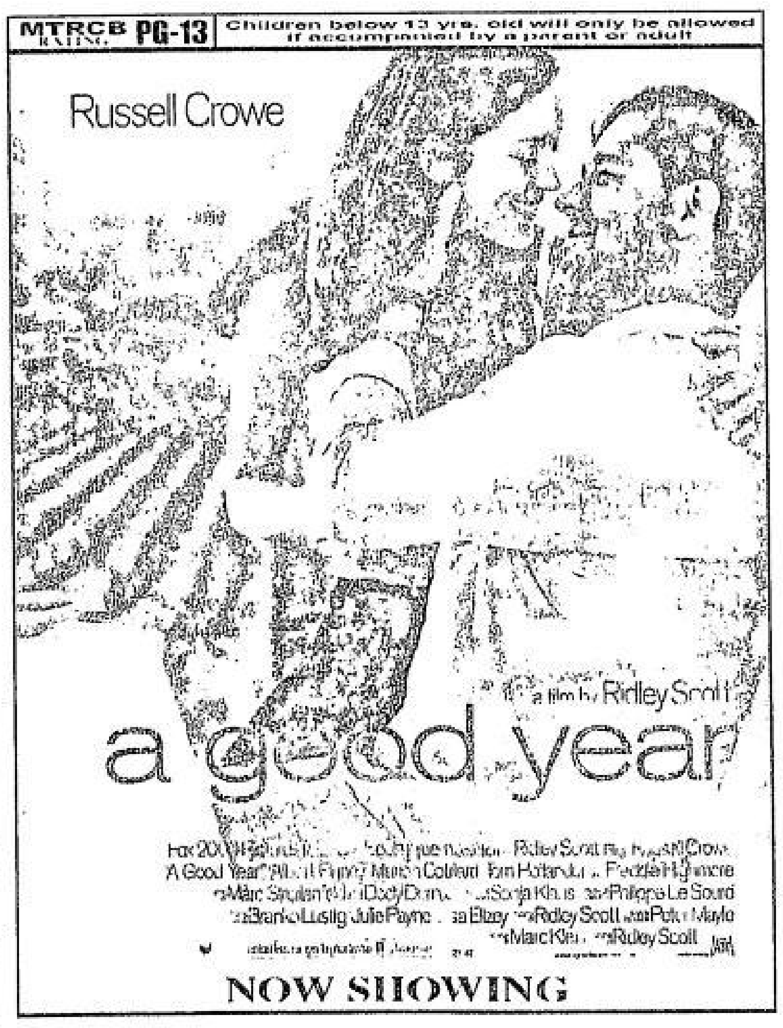
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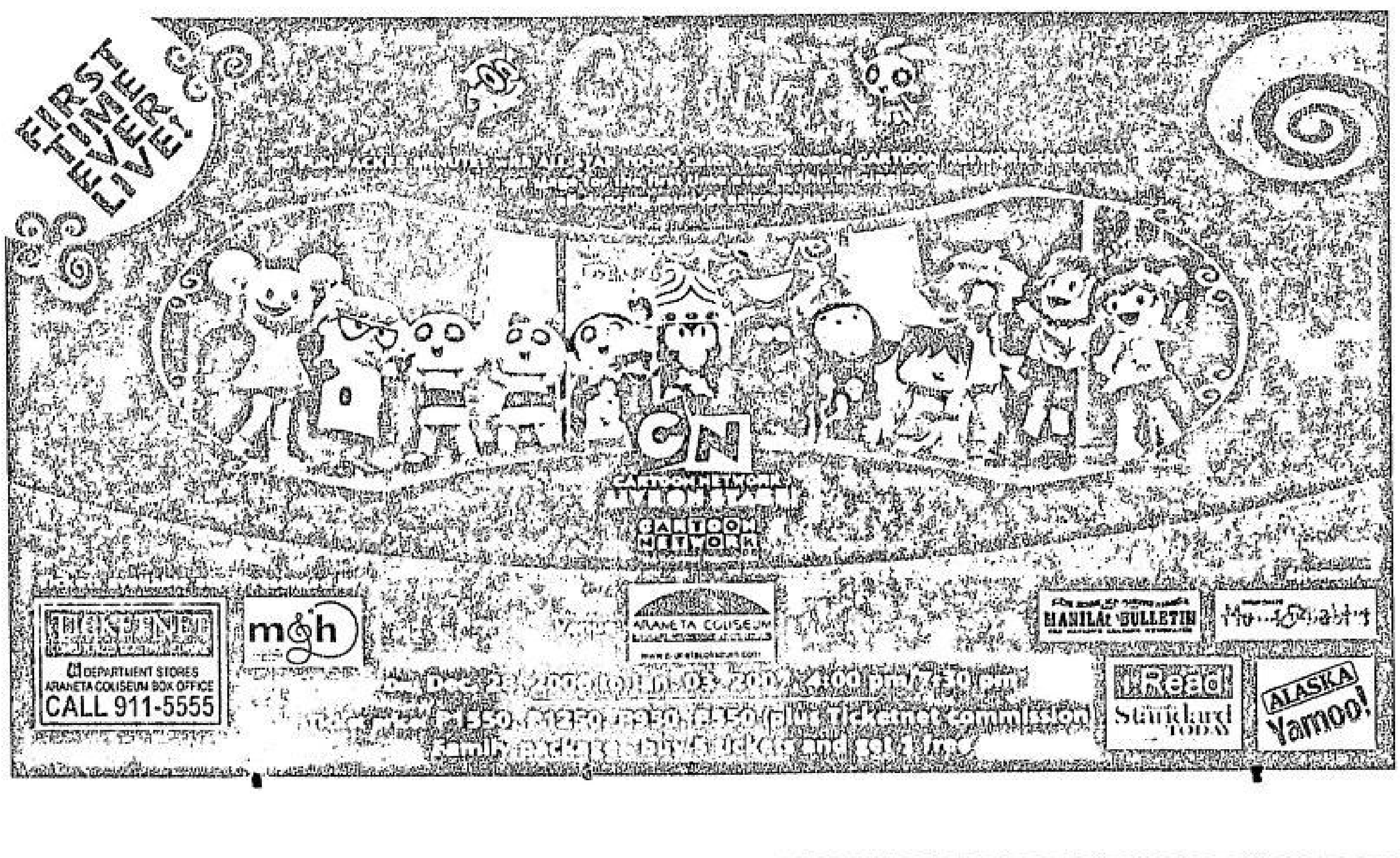


Dulce si

Otoniel

TOMORROW NIGHT AT the Philamlife Theater, Dulce sings with the country's foremost tenor, a fellow Visayan from Iloilo whose voice impressed even Placido Domingo.

"It is an honor to be able to sing with the great Otoniel Gonzaga," Dulce says, insisting that nothing in her past prepared her for this team-up.

Dulce never took voice lessons or study vocal placement, but when she debuted with the Philippine Philharmonic a few years back, opera connoisseurs agreed she had the timber of a Marilyn Horne and the dramatic intensity of a legendary Visayan mezzo named Conchita Gaston.

The other performers are sopranos Rachelle Gerodias and Camille Lopez Molina and flutist Christopher Oracion. The Manila Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducted by Rodel Colmenar.

Call 900-7023.

'Ay Que Jaleo' repeat

In the last few months, Manila audiences were treated to flamenco dance and music performances when Clara Ramona, world renowned Flamenco dancer and choreographer, brought home her successful show after performances in Hong Kong.

Locally titled "Ay Que Jaleo" or "what a high old

Taxes may

From page J1

Other MMFF beneficiaries are the Movie Industry Anti-Piracy Organization, Movie Workers Welfare Foundation Inc. (Mowelfund), FDCP, Optical Media Board and the President's Social Fund.

Martinez's stand is echoed by Carlitos Siguion-Reyna, chair of the Directors' Guild of the Philippines (DGPI) education committee; Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil, board director of the Independent Filmmakers Cooperative (IFC); Ric Camaligan, president of the National Cinema Association of the Philippines and Anti-Piracy Organization; and Boots Anson-Roa, Mowelfund executive director.

"Local cinema is one of the most heavily taxed industries," Roa says. "Film industry taxes are higher than those imposed on gambling." Martinez adds.

Penalized for existing

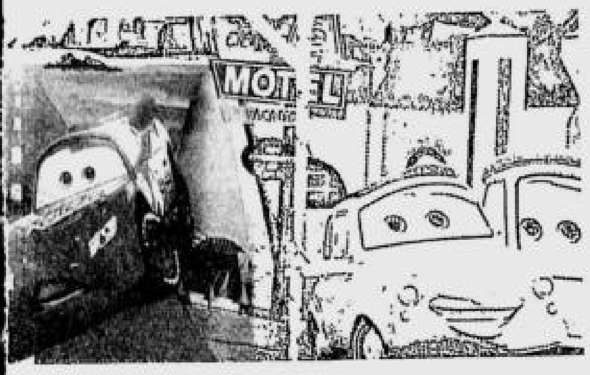
Marfil quotes National Artist for Film Eddie Romero who, in a forum organized by the Fair Trade Alliance last week, noted that the taxes levied on the movie industry is "at least 52 percent" of profits.

"It's like the film industry is being penalized for existing," according to Romero.

Siguion-Reyna backs this up. "FDCP's position paper... failed to mention the VAT. A producer's earning of P37.50 per ticket is further taxed 12 percent. The producer gets the smallest share from a P100 ticket—only one-third —so we hear producers say a film has to make three times its investment to just break even."

Siguion-Reyna also comments that FDCP's position paper did not take into account the "sliding scale" followed in dividing earnings between theater owners and producers.

This is seconded by Camaligan. "A 50-50 division between theater owner and producer is followed only if a



ngs with Gonzaga

time," the show features Clara and her company of "bailaoras" (flamenco dancers) Vernice Nieto, Liza Diño and Mercedes Soler.

A show goes onstage again tonight at Spotlight, 2257 Don Chino Roces Ave. Ext (near Edsa).

Tickets are available at the entrance.

Call 815 3526.

Nina at Bellevue

Nina serenades audiences of The Bellevue Hotel's 20/20 Entertainment Bar on Dec. 15.

The singer sings her hits and covers "Heaven," "Foolish Heart," "Loving You," "Jealous," "Make You Mine," "A Girl Can Dream" and "Love Moves in Mysterious Ways."

Tickets are at P420. Call 771-8181.

Concert series

The Department of Tourism presents "Walk Back in Time: The Intramuros Theater-in-the-Round," a concert series featuring historic and illustrious songs.

The show continues today and tomorrow and on Dec. 14, 15, 16, 21, 22 and 23 at 10 p.m.

Onstage tonight is the all-male 7th Soul, with Elmer Pascua on vocals, Nino Salazar on keyboards, Bam Santiago on acoustic guitar, Ian Tan on bass and James Amargo on drums.

SHOW TIME

DULCE

be . . .

movie flops and earns a daily average of P100,000 in its first week. If a film makes P120,000, it's 55-45, favoring the producer; if it earns P150,000, 60-40, again favoring the producer. But if a movie posts more than P170,000, the division is 65-35, favoring the producer."

Marfil says the IFC believes a tax shelter will have the most impact on independent films. "We support the Senate Bill (2158) decreasing amusement taxes to 10 percent [but] we also commend Mayor (Feliciano) Belmonte's zero percent tax ordinance in Quezon City."

IFC is among the industry groups that petitioned QC to abolish amusement taxes.

Roa admits: "Certainly, Mowelfund will be adversely affected by the scrapping of amusement taxes… but we are willing to sacrifice for the greater good of the industry. We have been working for financial self-reliance since our subsidy from MMFF was reduced from 60 to 30 percent in 2002."

"The law on the rewards system was written based on the premise that the industry is healthy. But now onerous taxes are threatening our very existence," reiterates Siguion-Reyna, one of the industry resource persons who helped draft the bill that would become RA 9167, creating the FDCP and CEB.

Siguion-Reyna also points out that France doesn't follow a two-tiered system that imposes a tax on foreign films, but leaves French movies duty-free. "Both foreign and French films are taxed 11 percent in France. But the National Center for Cinema (CNC, French counterpart of FDCP) rewards films a subsidy of 6 percent."

This is confirmed by Martin Macalintal, audio-visual attaché of the French embassy in Manila. "Both foreign and French movies are taxed equally, but 'deserving' French films receive a 'subsidy' called an 'advance' on sales."

H'wood's most powerful women

BEVERLY HILLS—THE MOST POWERFUL woman in Hollywood is Amy Pascal, who heads Sony's film division and serves as co-chair of Sony Pictures Entertainment, according to the Hollywood Reporter's 15th annual ranking, published this week.

Pascal unseated Disney's Anne Sweeney, who held the top spot for two years. Sweeney, president of Disney-ABC Television Group and co-chair of media networks for the Walt Disney Co., ranked second this year.

Judy McGrath, MTV Networks chair and chief executive, was No. 3 on the Women in Entertainment Power 100 list. She was followed by Paramount Pictures president Gail Berman and CBS Paramount Network Television Group president Nancy Tellem.

Rounding out the top 10 were Stacey Snider, co-chair and CEO of DreamWorks SKG; TV talk show host Oprah Winfrey, chair of Harpo Inc.; Nina Tassler, president of CBS Entertainment; Dana Walden, president of 20th Century Fox Television; and Bonnie Hammer, president of USA Network and Sci Fi Channel. *AP*

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3	CASINO ROYAL 1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:40 PG-13
4	THE NATIVITY 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00 G

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CASINO ROYALE 007 PG13 1:15,4:10,7:05,10:00	THE RETURN PG13 2:00,4:00 BORAT R18 6:00,8:00	THE NATIVITY STORY PG13 1:35,3:45,5:55, 8:05,10:15

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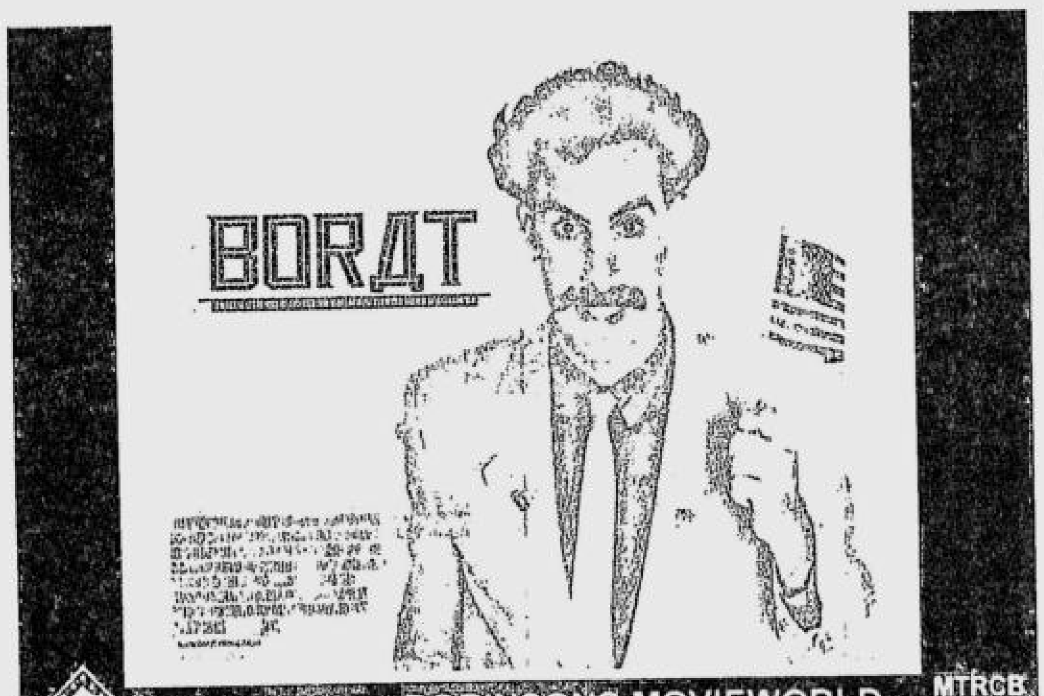

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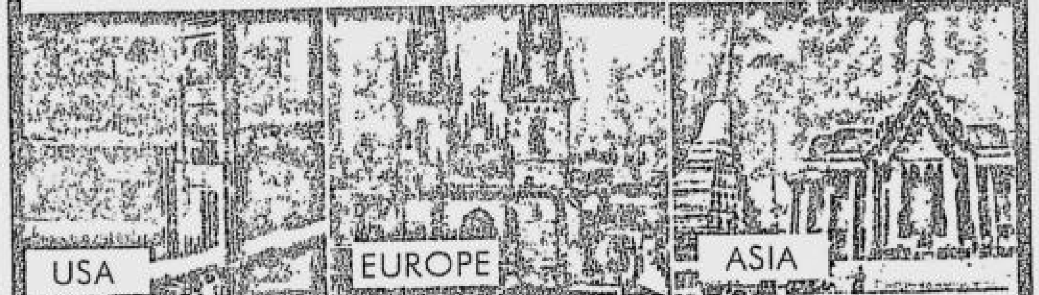

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Jack Nicholson credits 'sexual vitality' . . .

From page L1

often do you hear that voice (hoarser than usual that afternoon) in person? Although we do see the rabid Lakers fan at his ringside seat whenever we watch his favorite basketball team at the Staples Center.

Nicholson, one of this generation's greatest actors, is probably also one of the few men in America who still carry a handkerchief. He wiped his nose with a hankie several times during the interview.

Back to the subject of "sexual vitality," This was part of his discourse: "Physical and sexual vitality is one of the reasons that I'm lively. I noticed the other day that the LA Times agreed with me—more sex, not less, as you get older."

Ladies' man

Known to be quite a ladies' man, Jack has been linked to such women as actresses **Anjelica Huston** and **Lara Flynn Boyle**. His daughter with actress **Rebecca Broussard—Lorraine Nicholson**, 16—was named by our group as this year's Miss Golden Globes. Given to daughters of Hollywood folks, the title has been bestowed to **Laura Dern, Melanie Griffith** and **Linda Evans** who grew up to become actresses themselves.

Jack also has a son with Rebecca—**Raymond Nicholson**. With set designer and actress **Sandra Knight**, he has another daughter—**Jennifer Nicholson**—who gave Jack his first grandson, **Sean**, in 1996. "Gramps still disturbs me a little," he said of his new title. "I'll admit that one."

Guaranteed part of the Jack Nicholson lore was the instance when a Time magazine researcher, who was helping prepare a 1974 cover story on the actor, revealed that the woman whom Jack had always thought was his older sister was actually his mother. And the one he grew up knowing as his mother turned out to be his grandmother.

When a reporter asked him to comment on his old quotes like, "You only lie to two people in your life—your girlfriend and the police. Everyone else you tell the truth to (Vanity Fair, 1994)," he quipped, "Imagine a man silly enough to say that in public. Nobody in his right mind would want to be defined by it (that statement), certainly not if they have a girlfriend. But I know it's good copy."

MEN IN SHADES. One of these two grinning dudes is PDI's man in LA.

Also good copy was how unpredictable he was in Martin Scorsese's Best Picture forerunner, "The Departed," a movie he almost ran away with. But the equally fine performances of his younger co-stars, **Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon** and **Mark Wahlberg** prevented Jack from stealing all the scenes. In our interviews with Leonardo and Matt, both talked about how Jack surprised them with props like a sex toy or gun, or a burning piece of paper during their scenes with him.

Unpredictable

Asked to comment about his on-camera unpredictability, Jack cited another icon. "**Marlon (Brando)** was pretty unpredictable when I worked with him," he said. "We didn't know what he was going to do next. What they talk about in most acting classes is that what gives a performance a smack of reality is when it has that same quality that life has—unpredictability."

Buzzed about as a lock-in for many nominations during this awards season, "The Departed" is the first time Jack and Martin Scorsese worked together. Why it took them so long to gift us with a collaboration is a puzzle but here's wishing they will make up for lost opportunities and team up again as soon as possible.

Asked for his opinion on why American cinema is not shy about showing violence (there's plenty of it in "The Departed" since it's about the Irish mob and it's directed by Martin) but coy about sex scenes, the actor replied, "There's a paradox in the sense that you have to accept what's real—that a movie audience is more uncomfortable watching sex than violence."

Acting thin

Is there anything that this brilliant actor cannot do? "While I can do a lot of things, I can't act thin," he said with a laugh, recalling his initial rejection of **Warren Beatty's** idea to cast him as playwright Eugene O'Neill (who was slim) in the latter's film, "Reds."

We were originally scheduled to talk to Jack in New York but a salivary gland ailment landed him in the hospital and prevented him from flying. He graciously rescheduled a press con in LA. This last confinement seemed to have given him a new perspective on aging and mortality.

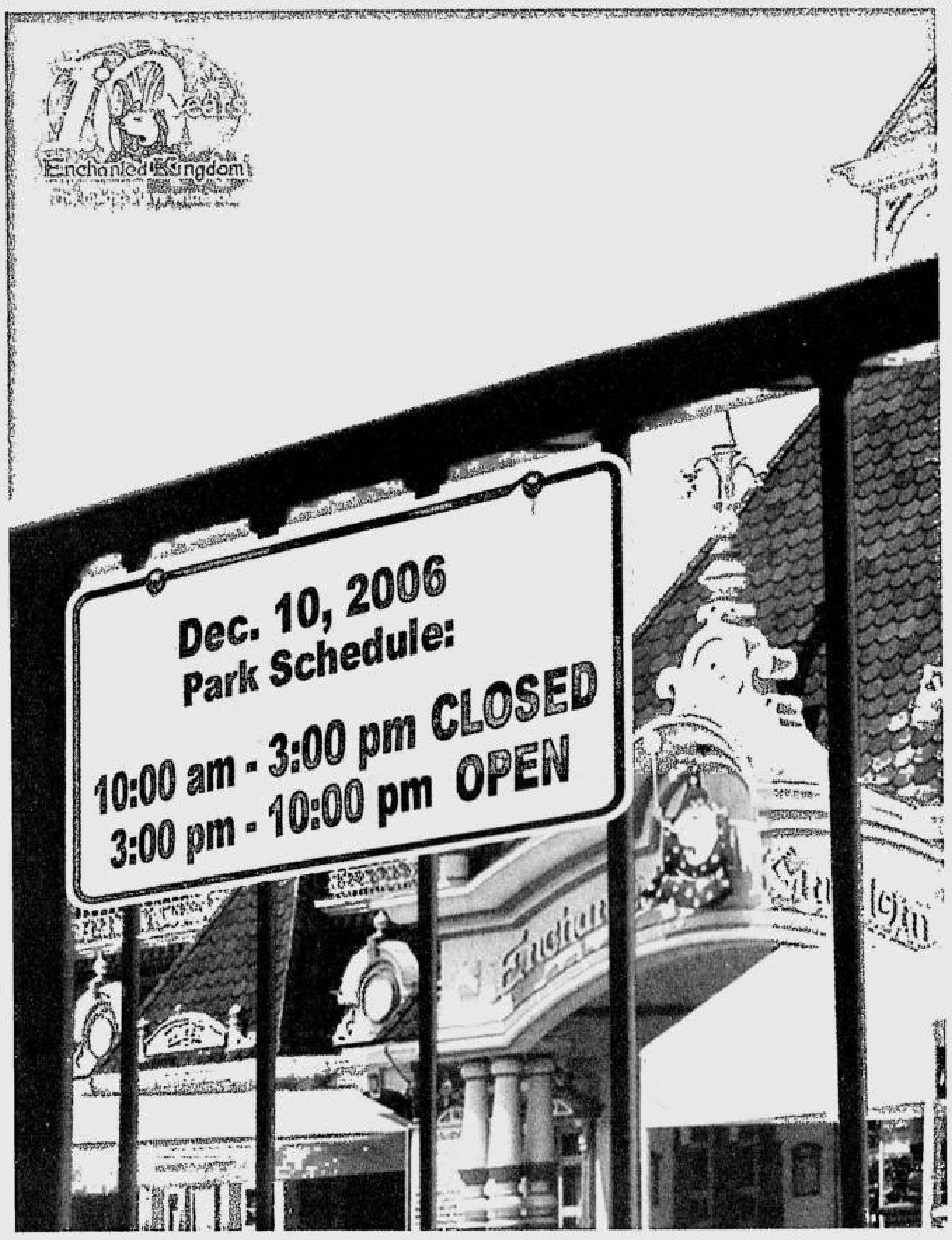
"I always felt it was my job to be peppy and upbeat," he said. "Well, during my last stay in the hospital, when I walked past all those quiet men in their rooms, I had a very different attitude."

In answer to my question on turning septuagenarian in April next year, the actor who appeared in "Easy Rider," portrayed acid trips onscreen and had his share of that wild life said, "I'm very proud to have lasted as long as I have. I think very few people are that fortunate."

When the subject of a contemporary, Dustin Hoffman, was brought up, Jack declared, "Survivors, he (Dustin) calls us."

He added, "I'm lucky—let's say that. And I'm aware that I'm lucky."

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.



Couples for Christ will be spending the day at Enchanted Kingdom.
Which is why the park will be opening a bit late on December 10 to make way for this private function.
Park Address: San Lorenzo South, City of Santa Rosa, Laguna. Telephone Nos. 843-60-74 to 78
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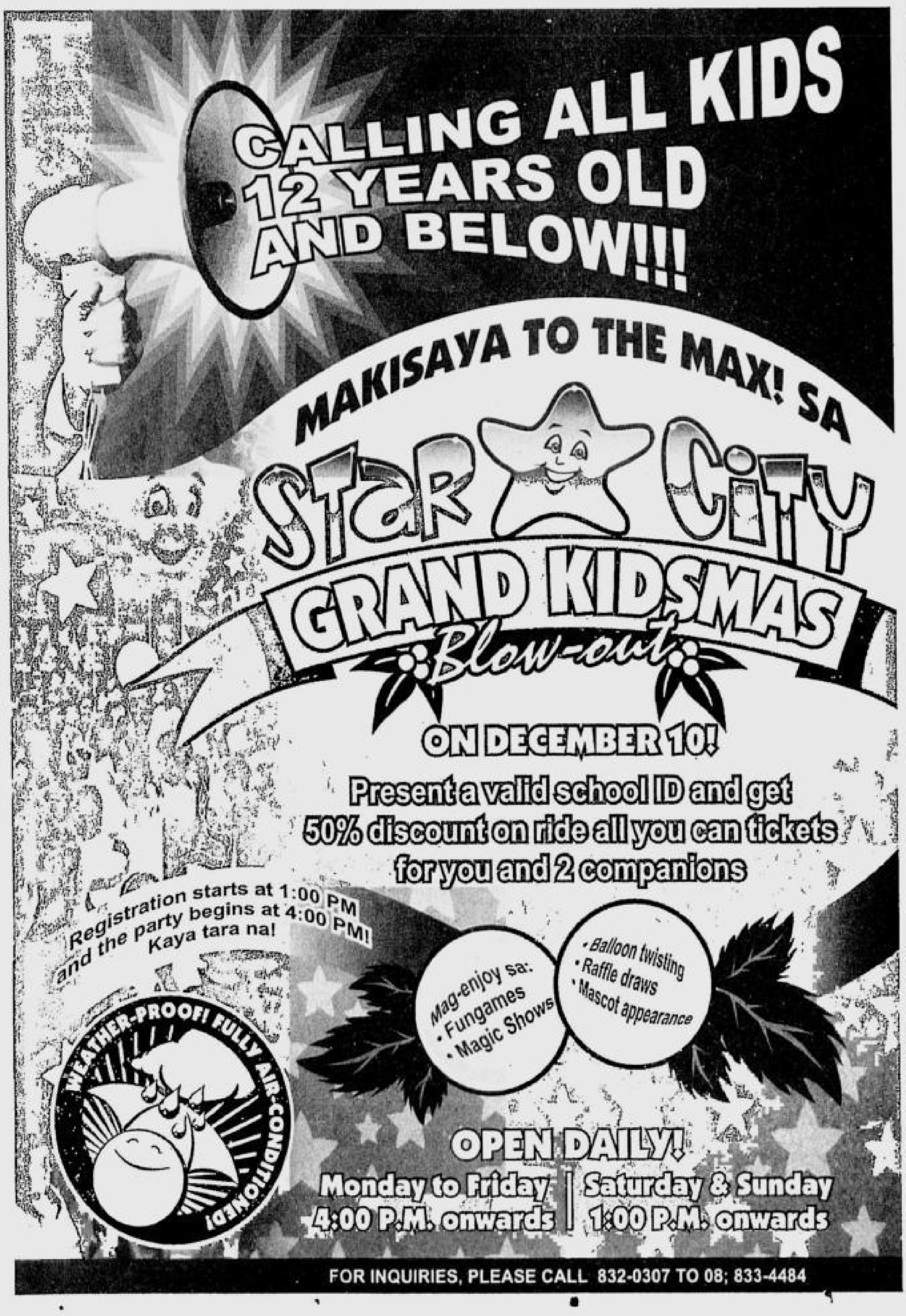

Brewing Up Gourmét Goodness

From a single store in 1997, Coffee Partners Ltd, owners of the San Francisco Coffee brand, has grown to over 70 outlets around Asia today. They have succeeded because they're passionate about coffee, food, and service - the very reasons people flock to visit their shops in Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore. You'll be happy to know they are constantly looking at new markets too and plan to continue their expansion around the region.

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Part of San Francisco Coffee's boom of success in such a short period of time is their dedication to provide the best service, the best coffee and gourmét dishes, and the best ingredients in town. One of those ingredients that adds that special gourmét touch to their menu is ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM. With its creamy texture and affordable price tag, it's no wonder more and more famous restaurants like San Francisco Coffee are switching to Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream to make their dishes taste even better.

Now, for a limited time only, you can indulge in specially made gourmét dishes prepared by San Francisco Coffee and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream. Every three weeks, a brand new beverage will be showcased. From November 28 to December 12, you can taste the gourmét goodness of Alaska Créma Caramel Coffee Jelly. But the goodness doesn't stop there, because with every purchase of the featured San Francisco Coffee beverage, you get a free recipe booklet from Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream so you can make your own creative concoctions at home.

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3	tbsp	vanilla powder
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1/2	cup	water

PROCEDURE :

For the coffee jelly :

1. Dissolve content of unflavored gelatin in 300mL boiling water.
2. Add 3 shots of freshly brewed espresso.
3. Stir constantly until gelatin powder is dissolved.
4. Pour into aluminum tray. Cool for about 15 minutes. Place inside refrigerator for another 30 minutes. Cut jelly into half-inch cube.

For the drink :

1. Put 3 tbsp of coffee jelly to 16 oz ice cup.
2. Prepare the blended drink by pouring 3 tbsp caramel sauce, 3 tbsp of vanilla powder, 12 oz. crushed ice and 1/2 cup water.
3. Mix all ingredients in a blender. Pour the mixture into a 16 oz ice cup.
4. Whip ALASKA CRÉMA ALL PURPOSE CREAM for topping.
5. Add another 2 tbsp of coffee jelly.
6. Drizzle with remaining caramel sauce.

Makes 5 servings.

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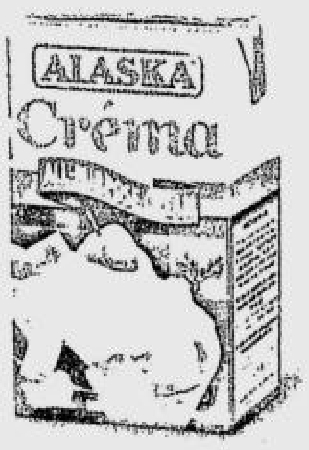

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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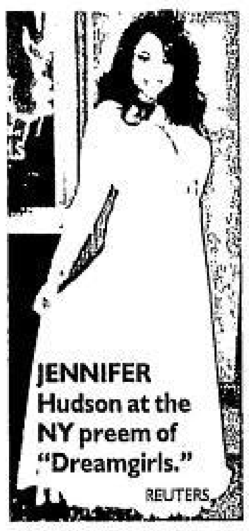
RED CARPET

CATE Blanchet at the LA preem of "The Good German." REUTERS



JENNIFER Hudson at the NY preem of "Dreamgirls." REUTERS

CAMERON Diaz at the London preem of "The Holiday." REUTERS

PARTY! PARTY!

MEET HUGO
He is 2 years old. His parents got married recently and big, big stars and other famous people turned up. *Page M2.*

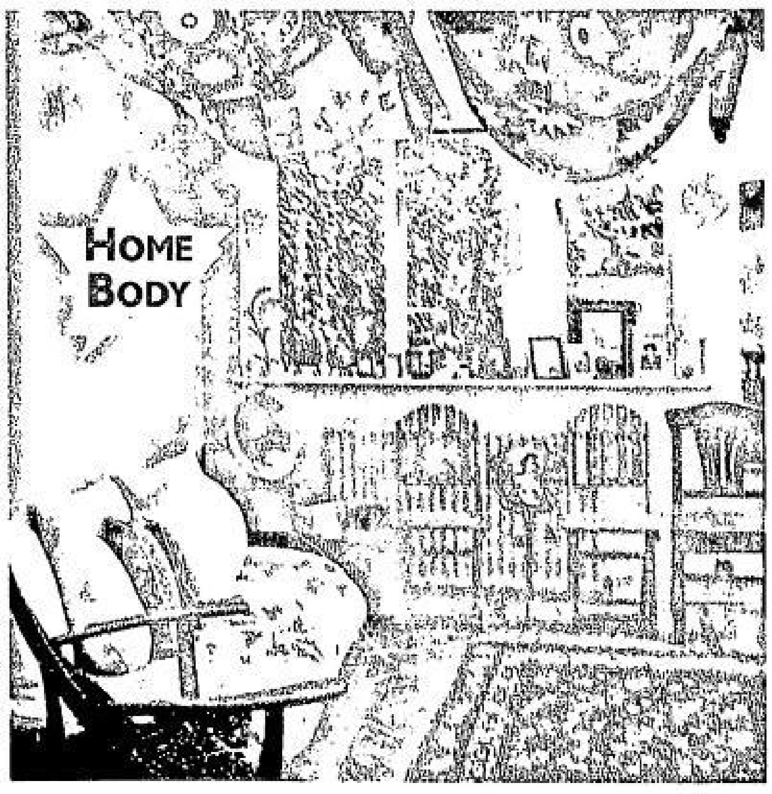
TAIL TALES

QUARK HENARES

My dog Lars von Terrier, a Jack Russell Terrier, is almost two years old. I named him after Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier, who directed "Dogville" and who is a part of the Dogme '95 movement, along with Thomas Vinterberg. My friend, Erwin Romulo, named his dog after Vinterberg. Lars is the most "chill" Jack Russell Terrier I know. A lot of people suspect he's on Valium all the time. With cinematographer JA Tadena and my other friends from the film and advertising industries, we have put up a store in Serendera called "Blow-Up Babies," where we take concept pictures of kids... and pets.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

HOME BODY



A FLAT IN NOTTING HILL

This apartment in West London has a very distinct Asian look because that's the way its owner, a young Filipino theater stalwart, likes it. *Page M4.*

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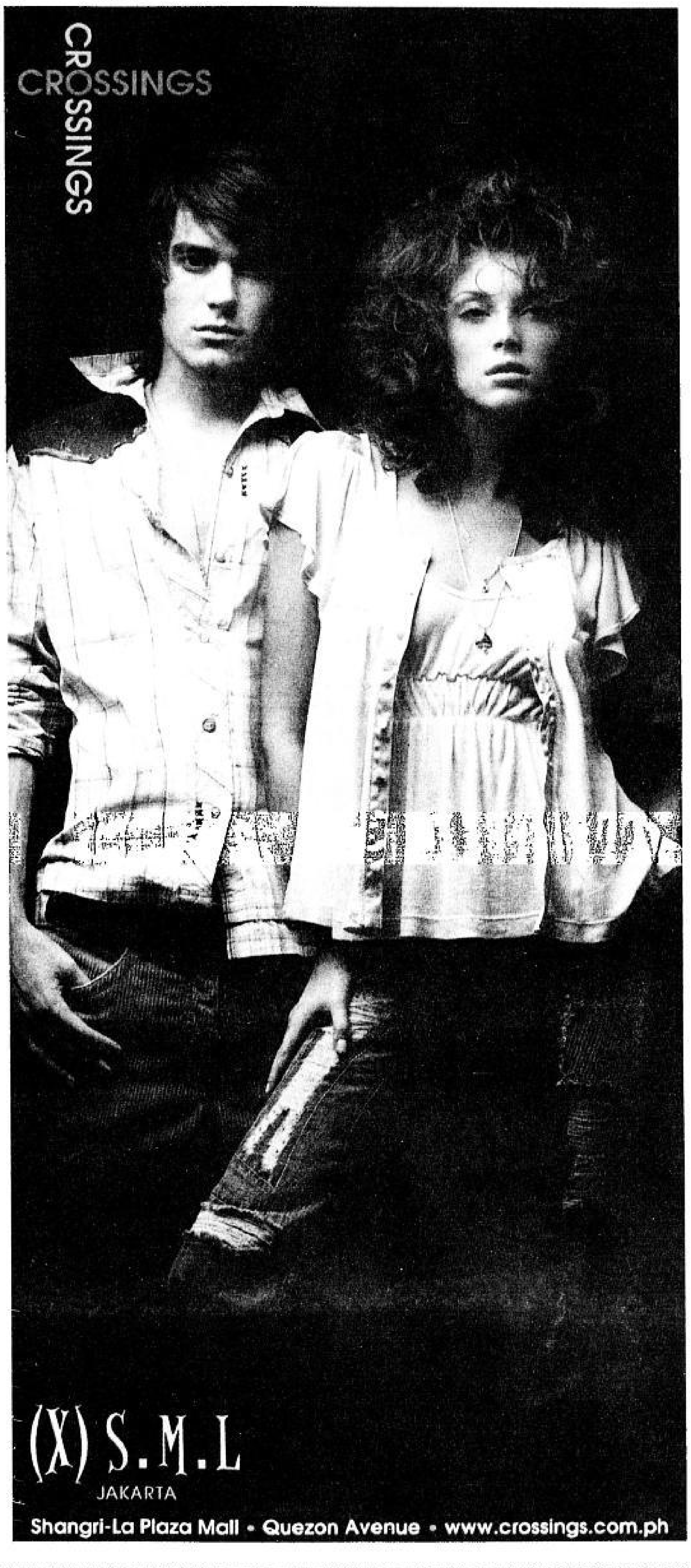

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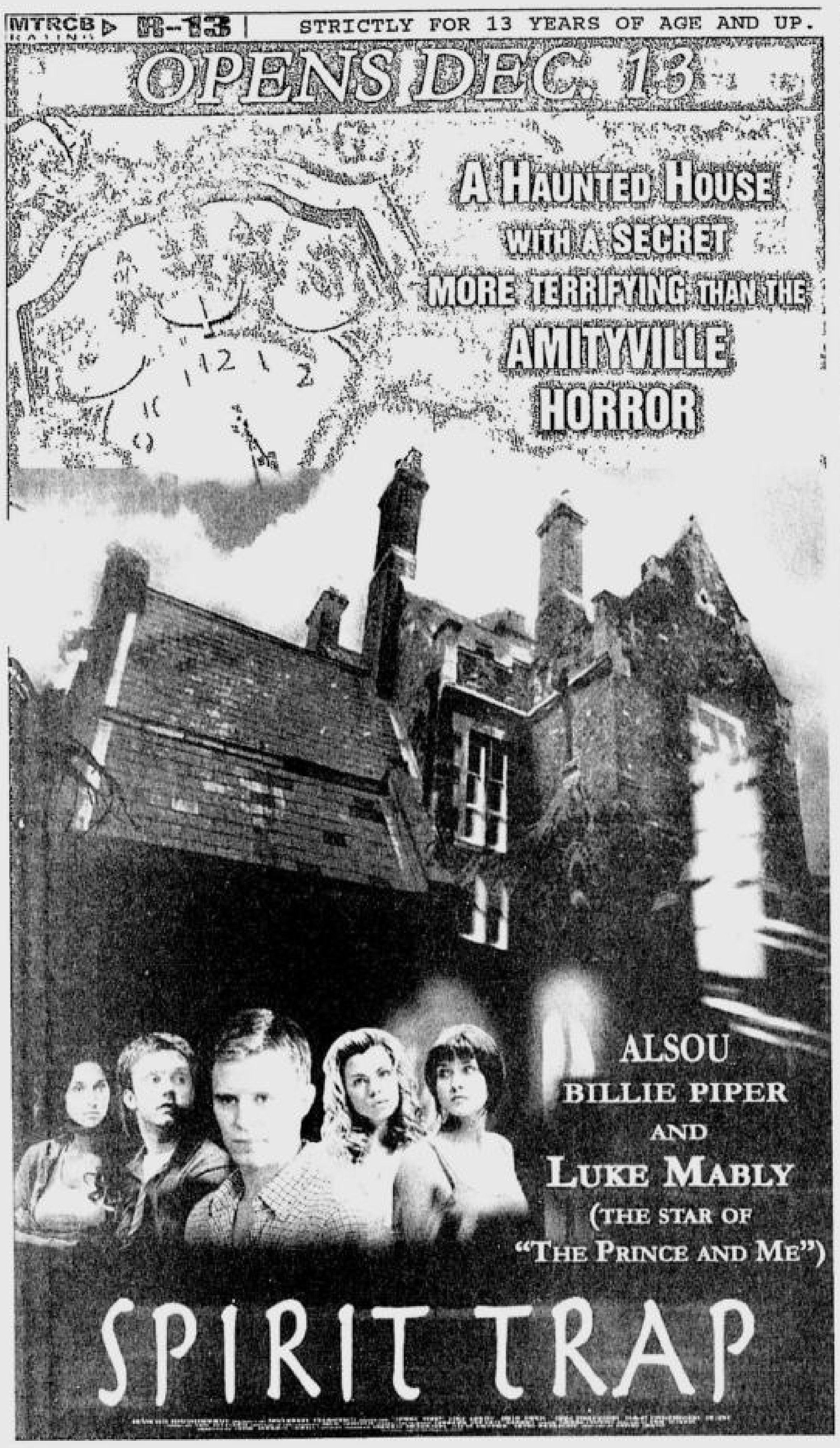
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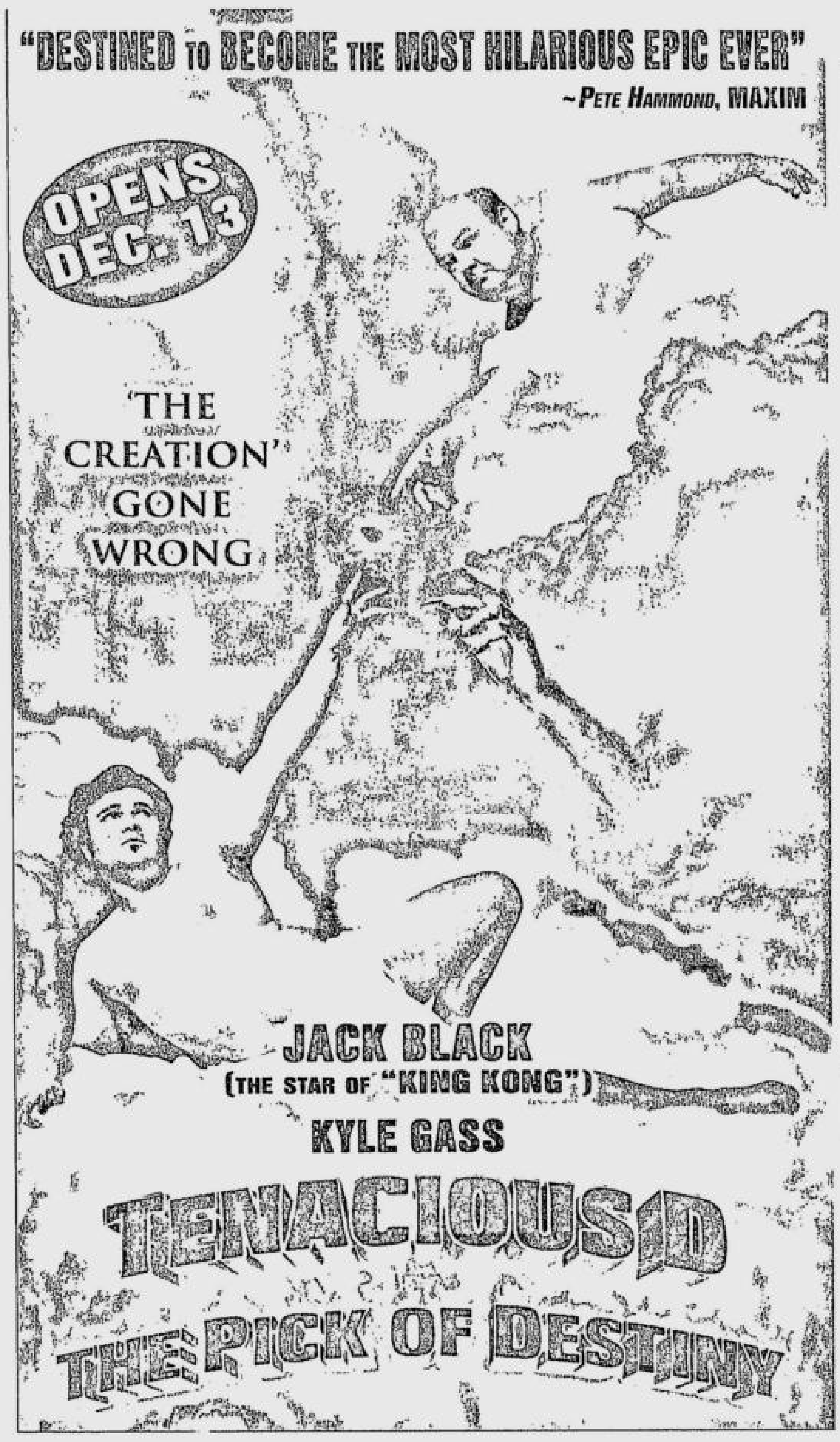
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THE BRIDE and groom, and Hugo

STARS for his

GIANCARLO JOSE SOTTO, only son of former Sen. Vicente Sotto and '80s movie queen Helen Gamboa, is not a show biz celeb. But big stars came to witness his wedding to long-time companion Joy Marie Woolbright, daughter of Shonie Ducante Woolbright and the late Eddie Woolbright of Cebu at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City, on Nov. 29.

PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO
ADDITIONAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF DCR

FROM left, Vic Sotto, Ciara S
Marie.

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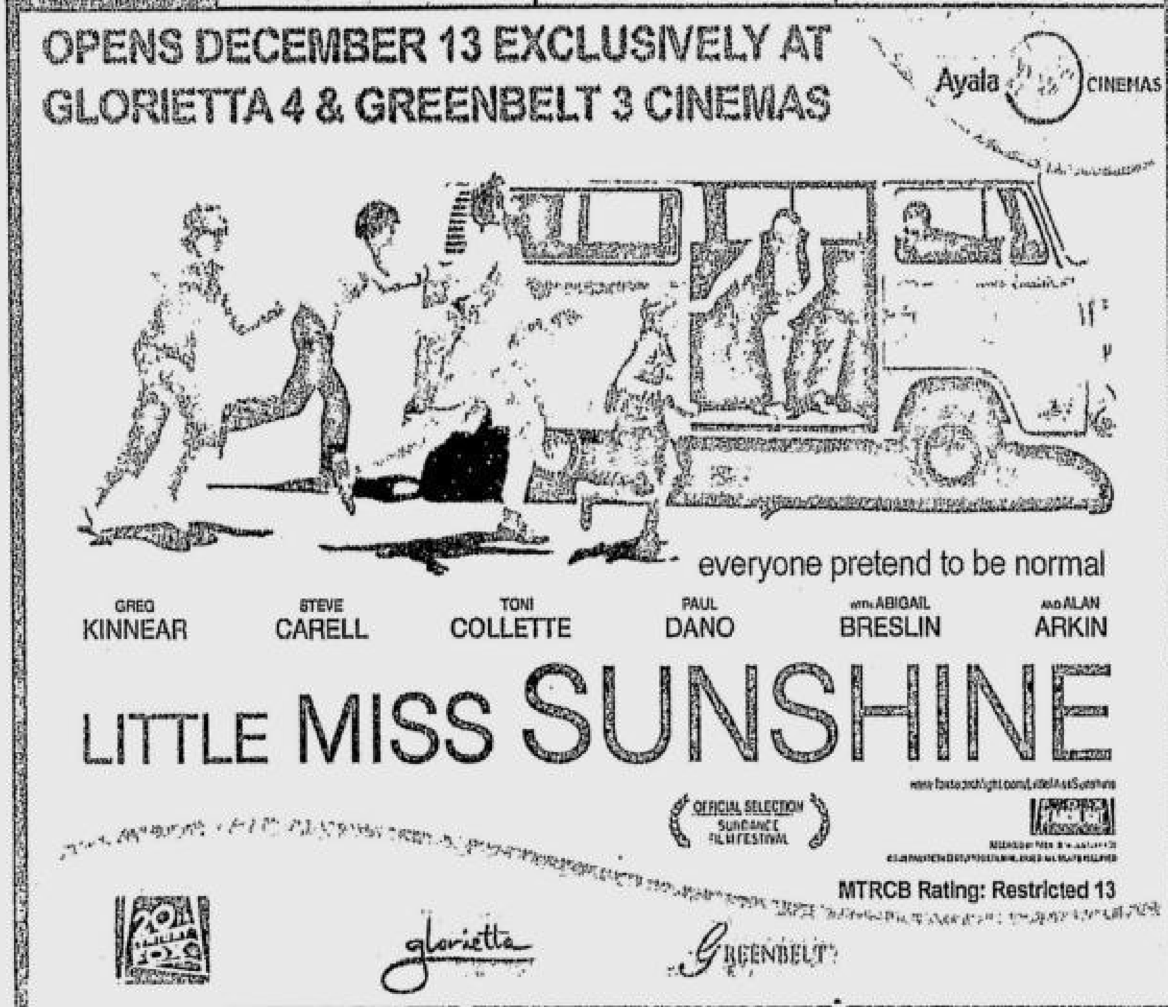
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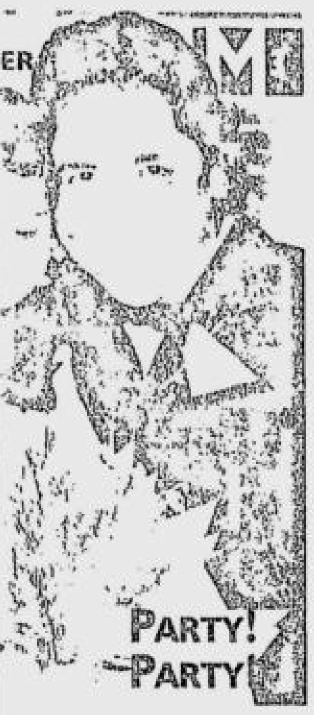
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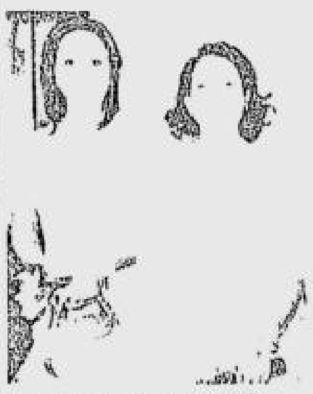

CHARO Santos and Lily Monteverde

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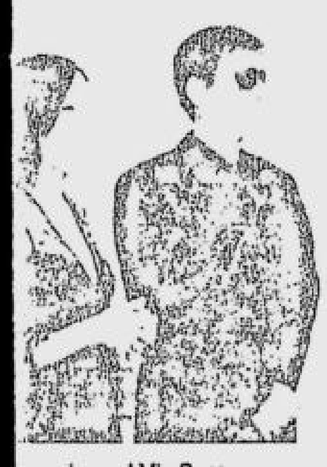
Sotto and Helen Gamboa



uanio and Vic Sotto

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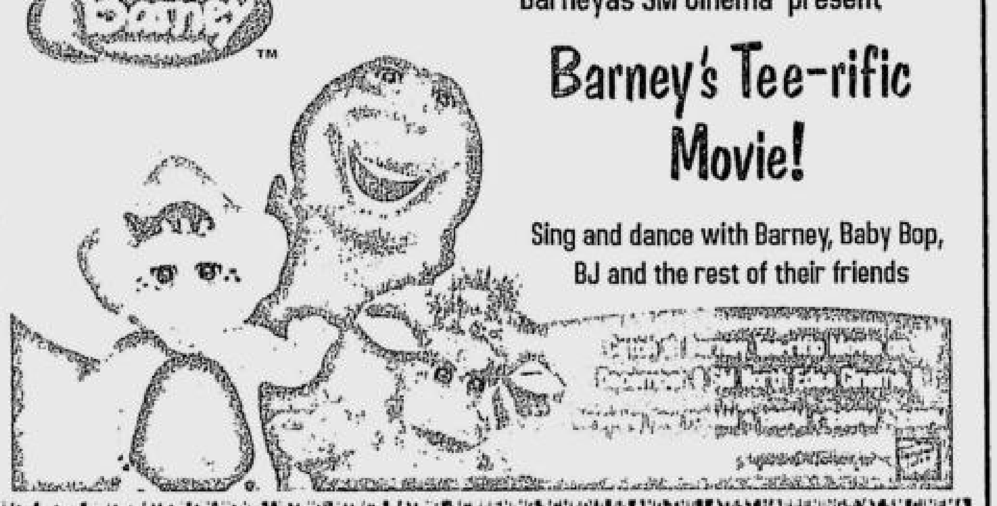

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12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

4 THE NATIVITY STORY
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 A GOOD YEAR
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 REYNA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

7 DECK THE HALLS
1:30 3.35 5:40 7:45 9:50

8 BORAT
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

9 FRAGILE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

10 THE RETURN
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

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1 HAPPY FEET
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

2 KAMA SUTRA 3
12:10 2:10 4:10 6:10 8:10 10:00

3 THE NATIVITY STORY
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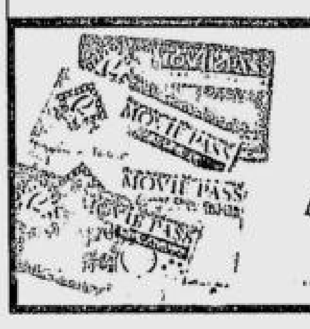

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A 'parol' in London town

Monique Wilson brings a piece of the Philippines to her Notting Hill flat

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT WAS A HOMECOMING of sorts for the former "Miss Saigon" star.

Last year, Monique Wilson returned to London, where she spent her late teens as a West End singer-actress.

Now, she regularly shuttles between London and Manila.

In the United Kingdom, she is taking voice lessons with her "Saigon" coach Mary Hammond and acting classes with teacher Dee Cannon of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts.

She is also teaching drama and is setting up a division of New Voice Company in London, as soon as she wraps up her commitments in Manila (NVC's "The Good Body" which goes onstage tonight and Repertory Philippines' "The Sound of Music,"" ongoing until Dec. 18).

She found a flat in West London, Notting Hill. "Just two streets away from the famous bookstore in the Julia Roberts-Hugh Grant movie," she happily notes.

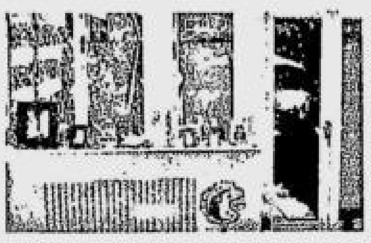
The way she describes her pad, it sounds as if it's the set of an exotic movie: "My design philosophy leans toward Asian décor and styles."

She has put together curtains from Indonesia, paintings from Vietnam, figurines from Macau, an antique gramophone from Belgium, wooden furniture from Antipolo and several *parol* (Christmas lanterns) from Pampanga.

"Last Christmas was my first away from Manila in many, many years," she says. "It was sad and quiet, so unlike holidays in the Philippines."

Fortunately, good friends were around to keep her company.

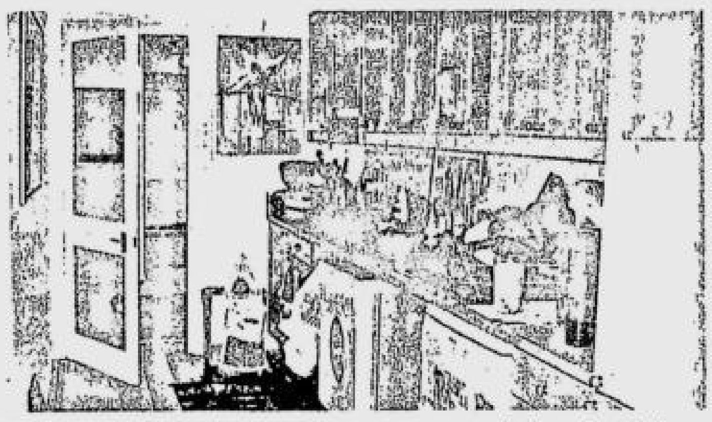
For a Boxing Day get-together, she spruced up the dining table in a purple motif. "The wooden dining table and chairs are by my friend Benjie Reyes of Antipolo. I had them shipped from the Philippines."



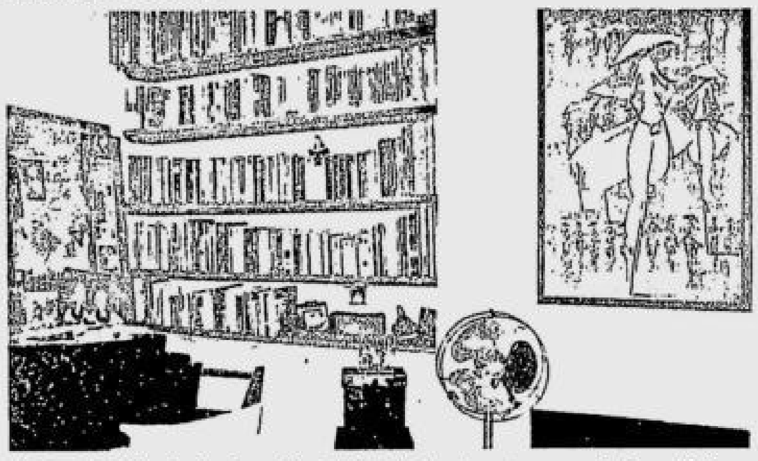
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MONIQUE WILSON

MONIQUE inside the conservatory, her favorite room. "It leads to the garden, where we have an apple tree and a rose bush. In the summer, I open the doors to let the breeze in."

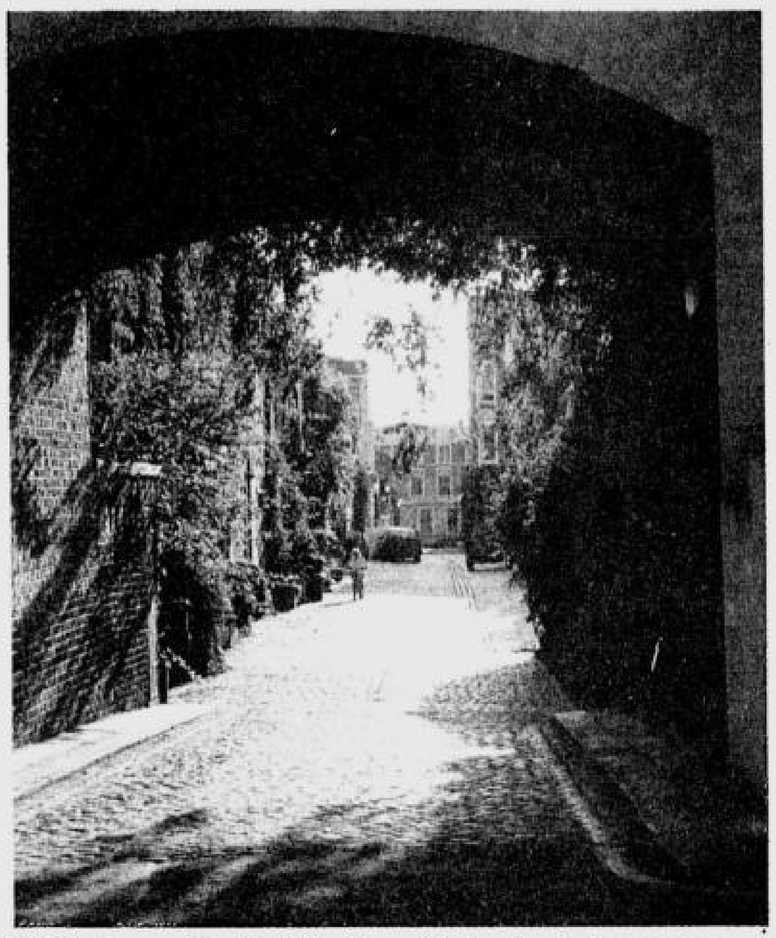
SHE WHIPPED up a purple table setting for friends who came to dinner on Boxing Day 2005. "That's the day after Christmas. They call it Boxing Day because it's the time to put back the boxes that all the gifts came in at Christmas." Note Pampanga *parol* as lighting accent.



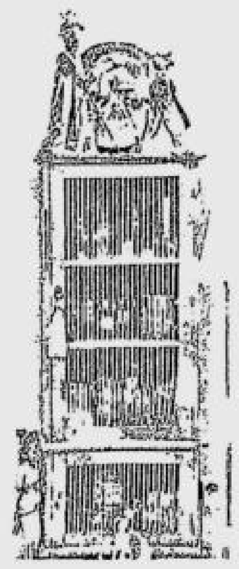
THE WAY she explains it, the main entrance extends into the kitchen, which in turn leads to the conservatory. And yes, that's another *parol* hanging in a corner.



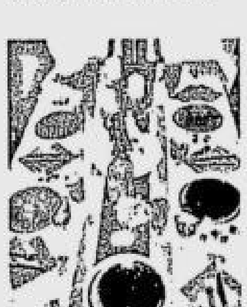
"VIETNAM" painting from Ho Chi Minh City is not a souvenir from "Miss Saigon." She bought it "because it depicts Vietnamese women on bicycles." The antique electric fan is from Jakarta.



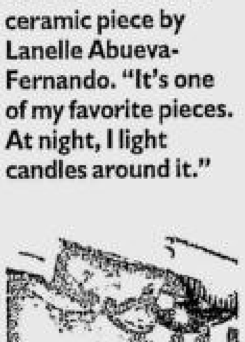
THIS walkway called St. Lukes Mews is just a stone's throw away from Monique's flat. "It's called 'Mews' because these were stables in the olden days. It's a very famous street and a lot of filmmakers love shooting here—for instance, a scene from 'Love Actually.'"



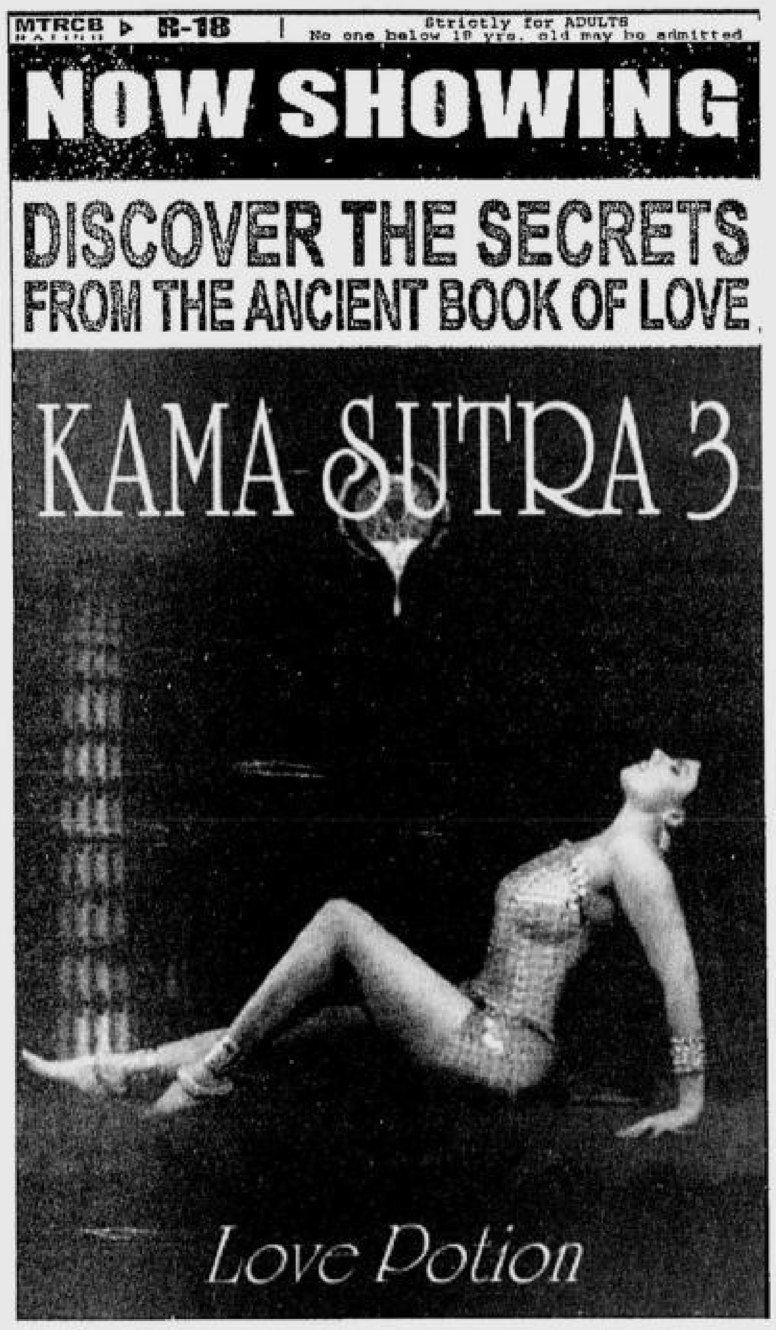
WOODEN cabinet is from Jakarta, *wayang golek* puppets from Bali.



CENTERPIECE is a ceramic piece by Lanelle Abueva-Fernando. "It's one of my favorite pieces. At night, I light candles around it."



WOODEN chairs in the conservatory are by Benjie Reyes of Antipolo. The "theatrical" gramophone is from Belgium.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KAMA SUTRA 3
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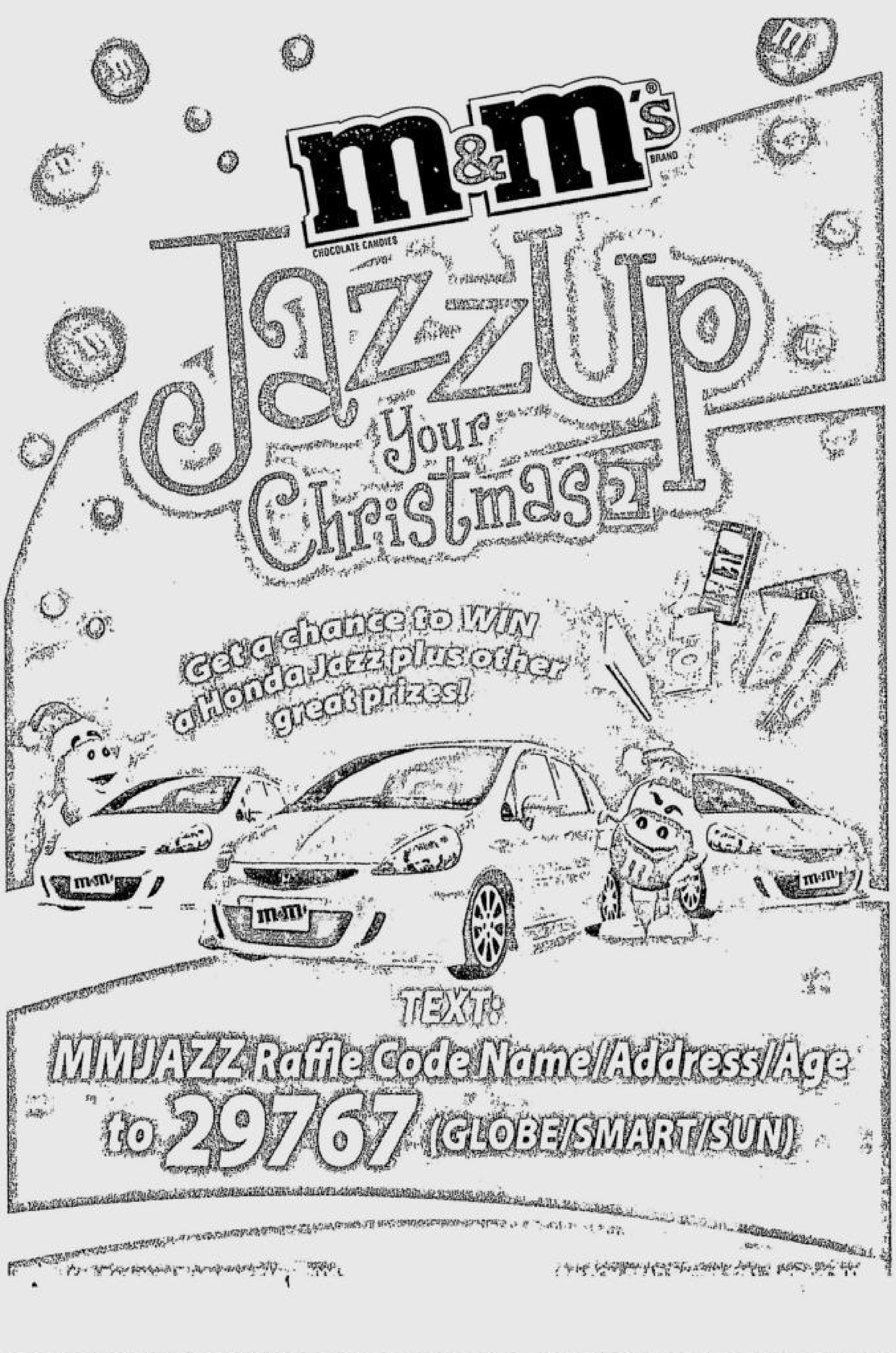
SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR
THE RETURN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